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Indian Springs Hotel

A 19th Century Watering Place



THE INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL
AS A NINETEENTH-CENTURY WATERING PLACE

by
Martha F. Norwood

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State of Georgia
Department of Natural Resources
Office of Planning and Research
Historic Preservation Section
Atlanta, Georgia

1978



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DEDICATED TO

Mr. Paul Varner
and
Mrs. Birdie Varner Sanders

Who, in their lifetimes, had the foresight to collect and preserve the historical papers of the Varner family and the Indian Springs Hotel, which have shed much light on important aspects of our state's history.

FOREWORD

In 1975, the State of Georgia, Department of Natural Resources, purchased an early 19th century hotel, known as the McIntosh Inn, in Indian Springs, Butts County, Georgia. It was purchased under the Georgia Heritage Trust, a program created in 1972 to identify, protect and preserve Georgia's cultural, natural and recreational resources and administered by the Department of Natural Resources. This hotel was chosen as a Heritage Trust site because of its connection with Creek Indian Chief William McIntosh and the Treaty of Indian Springs, signed in this building in 1825. It was this connection also that led the previous owner to call the site the McIntosh Inn, a name applied to it in 1953. During most of its long history however, the hotel was known as the Indian Springs Hotel and, in its declining years, as the Varner House. It will therefore be referred to in this paper by its historical name, the Indian Springs Hotel.

Immediately upon acquisition of the site, the Department of Natural Resources began research on the history of the hotel with regard to the Creek Indians. This resulted in a lengthy and well-documented account of William McIntosh, the treaty and Creek culture in general, but including only a limited discussion of the history of the site after 1828. Therefore, in 1977, research was begun on the history of the hotel from 1828 to the present.

It had become evident in the original report that the Indian Springs Hotel, even by 1828, was a favorite with both Indians and Whites as a health resort, where it was reported that visitors could find relief for

many illnesses by drinking or bathing in the waters of the Indian Spring. Such resorts were known in the 19th century as "watering places." By 1830, the Indian Spring and its namesake, the Indian Springs Hotel, had become the most popular "watering place" in Georgia and would remain so until the 1920s, when such resorts were no longer in vogue. It is this aspect of the history of this famous hotel that will be addressed here, building on the documentation given in the first report and serving as a sequel to it. The first report, entitled The McIntosh Inn and Its Place in Creek Indian History, was written by Sherry L. Boatright.

The history of this site is significant to several areas of Georgia's history which have been somewhat neglected. In addition to Creek Indian data, it has provided insight into what Georgians did with their leisure time in the 19th century, how people dealt with illness, political activity of the period, the migration of the people westward and the subsequent establishment of Georgia's western boundaries, and early architecture. The research and data compiled within these two departmental reports will be used as the basis of the restoration and interpretation of the Indian Springs Hotel.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A finished product is rarely the creation of a single individual. So it is with this report. It is based on primary and secondary material made available to this author by other historians and by individuals and groups who collect data for use by historians in interpreting the history of our state.

Much of the material in this report is from the Varner Collection. When this research was begun, these papers were in the possession of branches of the Varner family in Darien and Thomaston, Georgia. They relate to the history of the inn and the family who owned it from 1850 until 1953 -- Edward and Cynthia Varner and their descendants. The careful collection and preservation of these valuable papers by members of the Varner family, particularly the late Mr. Paul Varner and Mrs. Birdie Varner Sanders, have enabled us to learn more about this site than was anticipated when research began.

The Varner family has recently donated these papers, numbering over one thousand, to the Georgia Historical Society so that other researchers may benefit from the wide variety of data that they contain. The author is grateful to Mrs. E.R. Rountree (formerly Mrs. Paul Varner) and Mrs. Becky Watts for making these papers available, and to Mr. Peter Schinkel, Manuscripts Division, Georgia Department of Archives and History, and Mr. Anthony Dees, Director, Georgia Historical Society, for their roles in acquiring and processing the collection.

Many others have assisted the author by supplying data and assisting with research, including: Ms. Sherry Boatright, author of the

original report; Mr. James Cornell, owner of the Elder Hotel, Indian Springs; Ms. Lois McMichael, Jackson, Georgia; Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Newsome, Varner descendants of Sandersville, Georgia; Ms. Therese Newton, Varner descendant of Madison, Georgia; Mr. Earl Varner of Swainsboro, Georgia; Mr. David M. Sherman, Mr. Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., and Mr. Morton R. McIn-vale of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Office of Planning and Research, Historic Preservation Section; the staff of the Georgia Department of Archives and History; Mr. David J. Kaminsky and Mr. Edward Brock of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources for duplicating old photographs which appear in this report; and Ms. Sandra L. Bayer for editing and typing the final copy.

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PART I

NINETEENTH-CENTURY WATERING PLACES: AN OVERVIEW

Who are going to the Springs this summer? The season advances,-those who are in ill health, and those who wish to travel, to lay aside their business during the warm weather and to seek a place where blows cool breezes amidst picturesque mountain scenery, where flows the purest, the healthiest mineral waters.-Those who wish to be merry and to enjoy the comforts, the pleasures and amusements of refined society, with all other luxuries [sic] and pasttimes of a summer retreat should commence their preparations for being off to the Springs. The widowers and the widows, the beaux [sic] and the belles- the matrons and fathers and the little pledges of happiness, all smiling and gay, will be there! Ice creams, jellies, julips, and all that's good for an epicure's [sic] palate, as well as the dainties and dishes more substantial, will be served up in the finest and best styles by the accommodating, polite, proprietors. The music and the dance will not be wanting, to enliven the young and cheer the old. What happy days of courting and cooing, of skipping and dancing, of eating and sleeping, will be past this pleasant summer, by the old and the young....

The Federal Union
Milledgeville, Georgia
May 29, 1845¹

As the 18th Century drew to a close, the United States embarked on a new era. The new nation was established and its laws agreed upon -- in general, peace prevailed and the people could begin to see life as more than a day-to-day existence. They could now become concerned with their chronic physical ailments and the pursuit of happiness in the social realm. The nation had more leisure time. The "watering places" of the 19th Century evolved out of the times. People needed a place to go to socialize, to get away from the humdrum of daily life. They also sought cures for chronic diseases such as rheumatism, headaches, dyspepsia, neuritis, kidney troubles, malaria, and various nervous disorders.

The knowledge of the alleged curative powers of mineral waters had come down through the ages from the Romans. As an advertisement for a resort in the 1880s succinctly stated it: "When the burden of life is made heavy by the loss of health, and youth, and becomes intolerable, the victim naturally looks around for some fountain at which he can drink and have the ether of life and nervous force renewed."² And so, to satisfy both the social and physical needs of these Americans, the spas or "watering places" were born. In the more northerly states, watering places flowered in the mid- and late-18th Century. But as with architecture, education and other socio-economic trends, the "springs mania" did not sweep Georgia until the 19th Century had begun, in this state that was lately settled and last to declare independence.

The most notable watering places in the United States were in New York, where Saratoga Springs was hailed as that state's finest, and in Virginia, where the White Sulphur, the Hot (now the Homestead), the Chalybeate, Old Sweet with its Jeffersonian buildings and others were the center of Virginia society during the summer months.³ These springs were widely visited by patients and pleasure-seekers from other states. The watering places of Georgia, which increased in number throughout the 19th Century, were not as elegant and never received such widespread acclamation,⁴ but to Georgians, theirs were the finest and were the center of Georgia society as well. In an article entitled "Georgia Watering Places" in an 1850 issue of the Journal and Messenger of Macon, the editors wrote:

...No State in the Union has such an array of fine watering places as Georgia. Only think of it. We have the Warm Springs and the Sulphur Springs of Meriwether. The Indian

Springs, the Madison Springs, the Gordon Springs, the Cohutta Springs, and last, but not least, the Cotoosa [sic] Springs....⁵

The editor went on to chastise those Georgians who might be contemplating visiting springs in the North, urging them not to spend thousands of dollars among "our abolitionist enemies there."⁶

This editor only named a small percentage of springs that were in use at that time. Springs were so popular that as soon as one was discovered on a person's property, it was immediately made known to potential customers. Numerous advertisements such as the ones that follow can be seen in Georgia newspapers throughout the 19th Century. An advertisement in the Federal Union of 1838 stated that the subscriber had located a mineral spring on his place near Cassville, Cass County, that produced chalybeate, sulphur and limestone, and that he intended to build a boarding house.⁷ In Monroe County in 1830, a gentleman advertised that he had discovered a mineral spring on his place and would rent tent sites or take a few boarders, calling it Spring Hill Retreat.⁸

Not everyone agreed on the pleasures and comforts of these early spas, however. Alexander H. Stephens, congressman, vice president of the Confederacy and governor of Georgia, visited the Warm Springs in the state in 1849. A man who took his illnesses seriously, Stephens never hesitated to speak critically if the occasion demanded it. Stephens' biographer, Von Abele, attributes these sentiments to him:

It was a dismal interlude - for there were few more depressing things than the spas of the nineteenth century. It rained incessantly; there were goats on the piazzas of the buildings; the cabins were dirty with broken mirrors, uneven-legged chairs, and beds full of insects.⁹

Yet, advertisements and editorials of the 1840s acclaimed the excellent

accommodations to be had at Warm Springs.¹⁰ Given the location of most Georgia springs in the rural, western areas of the state above the fall line, that were the frontier settled after 1820, and given the lack of modern facilities of that period, there was considerable basis in fact for this depressing description. However, few such accounts have come to light. Most visitors describe the facilities and the board as clean and comfortable and the fare as palatable. The fact that people did indeed flock to these watering places indicates that they were habitable and enjoyable.

The exact number of springs in existence in a given year would be impossible to calculate. Some were simply day-use springs visited by local inhabitants, while others boasted commodious hotels, cabins, bath-houses and ballrooms. Some became traditionally notable, while others faded away soon after their discovery. Their success depended on several factors -- accessibility, facilities, amusement and the initiative of the proprietor.

One historian states that there were "eleven principal springs in Georgia where politicians, lawyers, educators, theologists and planters spent summer months,"¹¹ this being a count of the best known ones prior to the Civil War. Appleton's Handbook of American Travel, 1874, lists nine major springs, including Indian Springs.¹² But a search of 19th Century newspapers indicates a much larger number that actually existed, though many may have been operated for only short periods. [A listing appears in the appendix to this report.] By 1913, there were 170 known mineral springs in Georgia, though few had facilities attached to them.¹³ The types of 19th-Century springs included White Sulphur, Red Sulphur, Chalybeate and Sweet Chalybeate, Limestone, Hot and Warm Springs, all

offering their wonderful panacea -- but only during the season, from June to September.

The architecture of the watering places indicates a trend that was followed in most states and certainly in Georgia. Construction materials varied, depending on the abundance of stone or wood in an area. But whether brick, stone or frame, the hotels were at least two and often three stories, and usually had piazzas or verandas at each level on three sides of the building.¹⁴ In Georgia, they were usually frame. In Alabama, according to James F. Sulzby in Historic Alabama Hotels and Resorts, "the three story hotel building was constructed on the traditional summer resort pattern with double verandas on three sides at each floor level."¹⁵ A description of antebellum Madison Springs, Georgia, describes the hotel as having a dining room 40' x 92', a ballroom 40' x 50', and 30 chambers. It was a two-story structure with an attic, and both floors were surrounded by 14-foot-wide piazzas flanked by 28 large square columns.¹⁶ Catoosa Springs in 1850 boasted a three-story hotel, 120' x 70', with a basement for dining, 15-foot-wide piazzas all around and columns to the top.¹⁷ The McIntosh House at Indian Springs, advertising its opening in 1846, was described as having "70-80 rooms and piazzas extending all around it...."¹⁸

The springs of Virginia, though often of stone or brick, were of similar architecture. The White Sulphur Hotel was a four-story brick building, while the Stripling Springs Hotel had three stories with a double portico.¹⁹ The hotel at Salt Sulphur was described as "an enormous stone pile, four floors tall, hung with porticos and crammed with fireplaces, one to each room."²⁰ This style of architecture was not without purpose. The piazzas allowed the guests to partake of nature's fresh

air and scenic vistas from the privacy of their rooms, thereby aiding in the restoration of their physical and mental well-being. These piazzas or verandas were also useful for social activities. When one thinks of watering places, a vision of long verandas with rocking chairs and couples strolling about comes to mind.

Patrons of watering places were a varied lot, but one can safely assume that they were middle- and upper-class citizens who could afford the luxury of a vacation or who could indulge in the search for a cure of some chronic or psychosomatic illness. Many Georgians were, therefore, not caught up in the "springs mania." Poor farmers, struggling merchants and common laborers had little time or money for such extravagances. Those visiting a spring resort in 1850 would probably have met lawyers, doctors, planters, politicians, prosperous merchants or persons in literature or the arts, accompanied by their servants, for whom quarters were also available. Frequently, wives and children would stay for the entire summer season, with husbands joining them at intervals. Widows often visited the springs in search of romantic attachments. Professional men who were in need of a rest or diversion would spend a week or two at a time, with the promise of gay society an added inducement.²¹ In general, what has been said of the patrons of the Virginia springs can be applied to Georgia:

...Southern families of quality came to the spas, no matter what the odds, for the unstated but steadfast purpose of finding suitable husbands for their pretty daughters ... to escape the grinding heat and malaria ... Here they met their own kind; families of proper lineage; and here, at the Springs, their pretty daughters met and became engaged to the handsome young gentlemen in residence for the summer. It was an expensive gambit, but very often it was worth the expense.²²

The facilities at the springs ranged from a large complex of buildings with varied activities available for the more affluent guests to the small hotel with only the necessary outbuildings for the less pretentious, or somewhere along a spectrum between these extremes. New Holland Springs, in Clarke County, had a rustic hotel, numerous cottages and a pavillion over the spring.²³ White Sulphur, in Meriwether County, had a hotel, ballroom, cottages and lots for sale on which persons could erect their own cottages.²⁴ Catoosa Springs was described as having a three-story hotel, a row of neat cabins, billiard tables, a bowling alley and bath houses in 1850, one of the most elaborate claims of that period.²⁵ In 1832, Spring Hill in Monroe County had a two-story house, bar, convenient outhouses with or without chimneys for families, and tents.²⁶ In 1856, Monroe Springs in neighboring Monroe County, Alabama, had a large hotel, a winter residence for a family, ten-pin alley, billiard rooms and tables, "Negro houses", bath houses, two ballrooms and two stables.²⁷

Advertising in 1835, the proprietors of Madison Springs boasted of extensive halls and piazzas and good baths, and they stated that other buildings would be added as needed.²⁸ A modern historian who has researched Madison Springs states that it had a hotel with dining room, ballroom, 30 chambers, two rows of cabins (some with four rooms), and stables.²⁹ Adiel Sherwood in his Gazeteer of Georgia in 1860, writing of Indian Springs, stated that there were several large hotels capable of accommodating 1,500 persons, as well as 30 to 40 cabins. Of Madison Springs, he noted a spacious hotel capable of housing 150 to 200 persons, a school kept during the summer season and a promise by the proprietors that cottages were soon to be erected.³⁰

Many new hotels were built in the late-19th Century. The Wigwam Hotel, built ca. 1890 at Indian Springs, was said to be one of the largest frame structures in the world.³¹ It was four stories high, with broad piazzas and balconies with gas lighting, a palatial dining room, bath houses, casino and bowling alleys.³² The City Builder, reporting on springs after the turn of the 20th Century, reported that at Bowden Lithia Springs, \$250,000 was being spent to improve the springs, including a 50-room hotel, swimming pools, golf links, lakes and other accommodations.³³

In addition to those buildings advertised or described, one would also expect to have seen privies, stables, a smokehouse, possibly a detached kitchen, and other service buildings needed to accommodate a large group of visitors. So, any resort would be quite a complex of buildings. In addition, many people chose to rent or bring a tent and camp near the spring. This was many times a matter of preference or convenience, rather than a lack of money. Elizabeth Reid of Turnwold Plantation wrote in the 1860s that while she often visited the Indian Springs Hotel, her family also had a tent at Oconee Springs, which was nearer to her home. The tents, she stated, were pitched close to the spring, and she found these accommodations refreshing because of their primitive style. In a letter published in an 1888 newspaper, the writers stated that they preferred their "cloth house or tent" and the "camp life."³⁴ The proprietors of Montpelier Springs stated in 1831: "Comfortable tents will be prepared for those who prefer furnishing their board."³⁵

The proprietors of watering places, like resorts today, provided a variety of amusements for their guests. After all, few, if any, had illnesses that kept them bedridden. For those who, either from ill

health or choice, preferred inactivity, there were comfortable rockers along the verandas. As the guests sat and rocked, servants brought buckets of spring water to them. The buckets were passed along the rows of rockers, with a dipper in each bucket, several people using the same dipper from which to drink.³⁶

After the "commodious hotel" advertised by the proprietors, the most frequently noted facility was the ballroom or "dancing salon." Warm Springs in 1843 advertised that "...our ballroom will be opened every night - good music is engaged...."³⁷ White Sulphur Springs reported in the following year that its ballroom would be open every evening.³⁸ Antebellum Virginia spring Sweet Chalybeate had a separate building called the "dining and dancing salon."³⁹ At Shucco Springs in Warren County, North Carolina, in 1830, visitors were promised music and dancing with a special ball and party to be given on the sixth and seventh of July.⁴⁰

The innkeeper at Madison Springs in 1857 promised that a "fine band of music" had been procured for the season,⁴¹ which would play for dancers in their 40' x 50' ballroom.⁴² Monroe Springs in Alabama is said to have had two ballrooms.⁴³ All of the hotels at Indian Springs had ballrooms, and the Indian Springs Hotel advertised its ballroom throughout the 1840s and 1850s. Newspapers carried accounts of special dances held there, such as the Leap Year Soiree in 1856 and the Grand Fancy Ball in 1859.⁴⁴ The Elder House owners in 1885 claimed to have "the handsomest ballroom to be found at any watering place,"⁴⁵ and the Colliers of the McIntosh House assured their patrons that a "band of music" had been secured for the 1856 season.⁴⁶

A letter describing a "grand fancy ball" at Madison Springs, dated

August 8, 1854, tells of the atmosphere and distinguished guest list:

It was far more brilliant than anyone ventured to hope ... dazzling beauty, sparkling wit and mirthful fancy combining gave joyous revelry ... The ballroom was brilliantly lighted... I noticed among the spectators Judge Lumpkin of Athens; Judge Starnes of Augusta; Dr. D'Antignac, Dr. Dugas and Gov. Schley of Augusta ... besides various from Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi and Alabama ... the intelligent, witty and handsome Mrs. R. of Beaufort ... Dr. P. of Macon, Miss Y. of Mississippi, Miss G. of Mobile, Miss L. of Portland, Maine, as well as lots of others from Athens, Macon, Augusta and Charleston.⁴⁷

For those who chose to indulge in spirits, there was ample opportunity for such pleasures. Antebellum Madison Springs had a "good bar with wine, whiskey and brandy,"⁴⁸ and Shucco Springs offered the "choicest liquors" to their guests.⁴⁹ In 1835, the proprietor of the Indian Springs Hotel stated that "his bar is supplied with excellent wines,"⁵⁰ while a competitor in 1829 at the Mountain Spout Retreat also claimed to have the "choicest liquors."⁵¹ For the truly discriminating patron, the Alabama White Sulphur Springs, on the Georgia border near Chattanooga, in 1871 offered "the best champagnes, clarets, sherries, ports, ale, Porter, Guinness and others."⁵²

The fare was also an inducement. Montpelier Springs in 1838 boasted that "the table is abundantly and handsomely furnished,"⁵³ and in 1839 stated that "the table shall be constantly supplied with every delicacy the season and the surrounding countryside will furnish."⁵⁴ Bailey Springs in Alabama was noted for its cuisine in 1858.⁵⁵ Georgia's Madison Springs was said to be famous for its Southern cooking, the menu including chicken (100 cooked a day), waffles, biscuits, ham, beef, mutton, veal and pork.⁵⁶ The Indian Springs Hotel menu offered a similar fare, including fresh vegetables from its garden.⁵⁷ Omaha Springs in

Jefferson County, which opened around 1880, had a garden which provided vegetables for meals at the hotel dining room, along with fried chicken, ham and homemade preserves and jellies.⁵⁸ The most unusual menu entry found during this research was at the Elder Hotel at Indian Springs. Still in operation today, the hotel yet serves ox tongue. The present proprietor, Mr. James Cornell, a descendant of the first owner, stated that this entree has been on the menu for decades, and guests who have been visiting there for many years still request it.⁵⁹

In addition to dancing and imbibing, there were other pleasures at the springs such as a billiard room, ten-pin or bowling alley, a small library, horseback riding, card games (particularly whist), and picnics. Obviously, the watering places catered not only to the weak in body, but also to the pleasure-seekers and the genteel society of the Old South.

The success of a watering place often depended on its accessibility. Therefore, the proprietors were sure to include in their public notices directions for travelers, and in many cases, provided transportation themselves for the last segment of the trip. Before the railroad, stage lines bisected the state and offered the most widely used means of transportation to the springs. In 1833, Warm Springs proprietors stated that stages would run on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from Greenville, intersecting with others.⁶⁰ Hacks ran daily from Athens to nearby Hellicon Springs in 1836.⁶¹ The proprietors of Montepelier Springs in 1839 provided that "a carriage and horses with a careful driver, will leave the Springs every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for Macon and return every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday...."⁶² In 1840, they also provided a good stable for those who came on horseback or in their own carriages with good ostlers to attend the horses.⁶³ They also provided that year

that "visitors from the sea coast, on their arrival at Macon, will be taken direct on the Monroe Railroad to the Depot, where a carriage will always be waiting to take them to the Springs."⁶⁴ Warm Springs proprietor S.R. Bonner in 1843 wrote:

...Hacks run daily from Greenville - so that passengers can reach the Springs without delay - and at a very small price from Madison to Montgomery, as the opposition stages are still kept up, and they carry passengers frequently for their company. The Monroe Railroad runs within 55 miles of the Springs and daily lines of stages connect it also with Greenville. So the Savannah and Macon people can visit us without delay....⁶⁵

The coming of the railroad ca. 1840 enhanced visitation to springs that were fortunate enough to be located near a rail line. A correspondent of the Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel in 1850 recommended Catoosa Springs because, among its other attractions, it was located only two miles from the railroad.⁶⁶ For Indian Springs, the railroad came as far as Forsyth, approximately 20 miles south, and the hotel owners at the springs operated their own stage lines to Forsyth and back to meet the trains.⁶⁷ After the Civil War, only those springs which had been fortunate enough to have a rail line in the vicinity were able to survive. The train came within two miles of Indian Springs to a new town called Flovilla and a "dummy" or branch line brought visitors from Flovilla to the springs.⁶⁸ In Hot Springs, Arkansas, in 1881, a street railway was built mainly for use by invalids there.⁶⁹ Many hotel owners had special monetary arrangements with the railroad. For example, White Sulphur Springs in Florida in 1894 offered reduced rates upon all railroads to patrons of the springs.⁷⁰

As surely as convenient transportation to the springs in the 19th

Century was an inducement to potential visitors, the improved transportation in the 20th Century dealt the death blow to watering places. The coming of the automobile marked the end of the springs era. Harry Evans Woodward, writing of the demise of the Virginia springs, had it explained to him by an elderly resident of Sweet Chalybeate, now a retirement home for senior citizens, when she said: "That there thing you drove up in. That automobile. That killed the springs. People got to go, go, go. They don't want to sit and enjoy."⁷¹ Of course, the automobile cannot be held solely responsible. Modern medical knowledge and facilities soon disproved the claims of the 19th-Century proprietors, thereby removing their greatest attraction to visitors -- the fabulous cures of the waters.

The above-mentioned inducements were really the "icing on the cake." The most outstanding "gimmick" for attracting patrons to a 19th-Century resort was the "spa", "watering place" or "mineral spring." People were looking for a panacea for their mental and physical ills. So, in order to succeed, the proprietors of resorts were required to offer some health-giving power. In most cases, it was a mineral spring. One Georgia resort, however, proclaimed the curative powers of its "Rocks That Shock," along with a mineral spring. Hillman Spring in Taliaferro County drew many visitors to its rocks and waters in the 1890s, who claimed that there were rocks that "produce shocks similar to those from a battery."⁷² The patients had "tingling sensations" and their "limbs shook." These rocks were said to cure "kidney disease, insomnia, loss of appetite, diseases peculiar to women, nervous prostration, over-indulgence in alcoholic stimulant, overtaxed mental facilities, general debility and rheumatism."⁷³ This resort was the exception to the rule, however.

The "spring" or "watering place" was the most widely advertised and patronized resort of the 19th Century. Every advertisement or account regarding a watering place proclaimed the vast curative powers of its waters while noting its facilities, amusements and scenery. The claims of the proprietors were typical of the times -- poetically worded, lengthy and greatly exaggerated. But they said what people wanted to hear. They offered an elixir for the ills of the world, and the people believed. And many were cured, for it is a simple fact that drinking clean water, having a healthy diet, plenty of fresh air, good company and relaxation can cure many chronic diseases and most imagined ones.

Many of the advertisements and accounts for watering places are worthy of note. Today, we find them amusing. Yet, they were earnestly written and often are characterized by a certain literary flair, such as the one quoted at the beginning of this report. Following are some particularly prosaic ones which illustrate both the style of the advertisements and the alleged virtues of the waters.

Warm Springs
Meriwether County, Georgia
August, 1843

This establishment is again open for the reception of visitors. We did our best to please last season, and will do the same this. We invite our old customers, and would be glad to see an abundance of new ones this season. Our charges will be the same as heretofore \$30 per month including baths, etc., and we will receive in payment the same kind of funds, to-wit: Central and Alabama money, at par. Our baths are splendidly arranged - six in number - each ten feet square in the clear, and so arranged as to raise the water to any depth required. The spring affords upwards of thirteen hundred gallons of water per minute and the temperature is precisely 90 degrees - just the right temperature for pleasant bathing - the water is highly medicinal. and is a certain cure for Rheumatism, Dyspepsia, etc. The analysis of the water is taken by Dr. John Rogers Cotting, State Geologist of Georgia:....

Height above the level of the sea, 79314 [sic] feet - quantity one wire pint, or 28,875 cubic inches - specific gravity .998 - distilled water being 1,000 gasses....

Our ballroom will be opened every night - good music is engaged - good roads are made for riding and nothing shall be wanting on our part to render all comfortable. Hacks run daily from Greenville so that passengers can reach the Springs without delay - and at a very small price from Madison to Montgomery, as the opposition stages are still kept up and they carry passengers frequently for their company. The Monroe Railroad runs within 55 miles of the Springs and daily lines of stages connect it also with Greenville. So the Savannah and Macon people can visit us without delay.

Any person afflicted with Rheumatism or Dyspepsia, who will visit these springs - remain during three summer months and are not completely cured (no matter how bad a case it is) if they bathe and drink the water regularly and pay proper attention to their diet, no charge will be made for board, etc....

S.R. Bonner

June 21, 1843⁷⁴

* * *

Montpelier Springs
Monroe County, Georgia
June, 1840

The Montpelier House will be open for the reception of visitors on the 10th of June - This celebrated watering place is beautifully situated 16 miles west of Macon, and is nearly central to the State. Its location and scenery blend the advantages of health and pure air, with the charm of a romantic panorama of woods, and vales, and cultivated fields, at once interesting as a retreat to the valetudinarian - to the man of business, and the devotee of pleasure. The analysis of these waters having been laid before the public, I deem it unnecessary to say more than apply their medicinal properties to the healing art. In the mitigation and relief of the following diseases, they stand pre-eminent; Dropsey, hydropcephalus in infants, muasmus, teething, cholera infantum, rheumatism, sick headache, dyspepsia, bilious derangement and affection of the liver, diabetic and calculus disorders of the kidneys, flour albus, and diseases of females, herpetic and scrofulous eruptions of the skin, together with a variety of complaints originating from low and miasmatic districts of country. The BATHS, which are great restoratives of debilitative constitutions, will be kept in good order, and a careful Male and Female, to attend them. The chambers are large and airy, and

the servants will be found to be competent and attentive. The Table shall be constantly supplied with every delicacy the season and the surrounding countryside will furnish. - The Stables will be well supplied with provenders, and careful ostlers to attend them.

The subscriber takes this opportunity to return his thanks to his friends and the public, for the patronage he has received since he has been proprietor of the Montpelier House, and assures them, that no exertions as on his part shall be wanting, to give entire satisfaction to all who may visit his House.

Visitors from the sea-coast, on their arrival at Macon, will be taken direct on the Monroe Railroad to the Depot, where a carriage will always be in waiting to take them to the Springs.

H.J. Chalmers⁷⁵

* * *

White Sulphur Springs
Meriwether County, Georgia
June, 1843

This delightful summer retreat will again be open for the reception of company on the first day of June. In addition to the accommodations of the past years, the proprietors have erected a number of buildings suited to the accommodation of families, and for lodging rooms. Our old friends who have favored us with their company during the past season are especially invited to visit us again, that we may make a suitable return of gratitude for past favors, in the enlarged accommodations we shall offer them. And to strangers we will say, that the comforts, pleasures and privileges of the White Sulphur Springs shall not be surpassed by those at any other watering place in the South. - From both the analysis and use of the Water, it is found to be specially tonic in its nature, and this in a higher degree than any other water in the State, that possesses also diffusible qualities.

Besides the Springs known and used heretofore, several others adjacent have been discovered, which are of various qualities and strength, and these, with the old and tried ones, cannot fail to cure all the diseases with which man or woman is afflicted. Several of the Springs have been improved with pleasant walks, summer bowers, and flower gardens.

We propose to sell fifty or one hundred lots, either at public sales, or to private purchasers, in eligible situations.

We will add too, that whilst striving to satisfy visitors in our minerals and attention, we will try also to satisfy them in charges.

Walker Duncan
M.D. Ector

May 17, 1843

The Federal Union, Geo. Journal, Ala. Journal and Floridian will please publish the above three months, and forward their accounts to the proprietors, and themselves and their friends to the Springs.⁷⁶

* * *

New Holland Springs
Clarke County, Georgia
Winter, 1885-86

(A description by Rev. Timothy Harly)

...rustic hotel, around which cluster the cosy [sic] little cottages where the contented pilgrims, who come hither in bands every summer, sojourn as in castles of dreamy indolence, and sleep as in arbours of blissful ease. Descending the slope beside the hotel, we reach the pretty pavillion overshadowing the principal spring, whose translucent water lies in its little bed like a sparkling crystal amid which the busy bubbles spring to the surface to shine like beauteous gems in its heaven - reflecting breast.⁷⁷

* * *

Madison Springs
Madison County, Georgia

(A description by Adiel Sherwood around 1860)

...are 23 m. N.W. of Athens, 7 N.W. of Danielsville. The waters are strongly impregnated with iron and are effectual in the cure of rheumatism, and cutaneous disorders. This has been a fashionable resort, but is not at present so much frequented as the Indian Springs. Here is a spacious hotel, capable of affording accommodations to 150, or 200 persons. Several lots have been purchased of the proprietors, and comfortable houses erected on them for a summer residence. A school is kept here during the summer season. People in search of health can find no purer water, not healthier climate than are found in this section. The Soil is very poor around the Springs.⁷⁸

* * *

White Sulphur Springs in Florida, 1894

'Way Down Upon De Swanee Ribber'

Where will you spend that vacation? Why not go to the White Sulphur Springs Hotel, at White Springs, on the Georgia Southern and Florida Railroad?

It is the coolest resort in the State, immediately upon the banks of the Suwanee River. This popular hotel has been thoroughly renovated, painted and refurnished, and is run in connection with the wonderful Sulphur Spring, which discharges 2,000,000 gallons per hour. The finest bathing pool in the world. Good fishing and hunting. Pretty drives. No mosquitoes; no malaria. The water is a specific for rheumatism and dyspepsia in all forms; nervous exhaustions; all kidney and stomach troubles; all diseases of the skin. Reduced rates upon all railroads. Rates \$2-2.50/day. Special rates by week or month.

Wm. H. Wren
White Springs, Florida⁷⁹

These accounts and advertisements are only a small sampling of those appearing in the newspapers and periodicals of the 19th Century. They show that the Georgians of that period never tired of the romantic setting and never lost faith in the curative powers of the famous watering places of their era.

NOTES

Part I: 19th-Century Watering Places: An Overview

¹The Federal Union, Milledgeville, Ga., May 29, 1845, p. 2, c. 2.

²The Electric Health Resort, The Richmond Dispatch, Richmond, Va. (This is an advertising brochure, date unknown, in the possession of Dr. A. Mel Lunceford of Crawfordville, Ga.)

³Harry Evans Woodward, "They Called Them Watering Places," Virginia Cavalcade, Summer, 1963, p. 26.

⁴Indian Springs Hotel Register, 1852-1870, Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.

Cleveland Amory, The Last Resorts. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), p. 3.

⁵The Georgia Journal and Messenger, Macon, Ga., May 29, 1850, p. 2, c. 3.

⁶Ibid.

⁷The Federal Union, May 15, 1838, p. 4, c. 5.

⁸The Georgia Messenger, July 17, 1830, p. 3, c. 4.

⁹Rudolph Von Abele, Alexander H. Stephens, A Biography (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), p. 120.

¹⁰The Federal Union, August 8, 1843, p. 4, c. 2; and May 29, 1845, p. 2, c. 2.

¹¹Porter Carswell, "Madison Springs: Antebellum Spa Where the South Cured Its Gout," The Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Ga. (From an undated copy of the article as reprinted in the Atlanta Journal in the files of the Historic Preservation Section.)

¹²Charles H. Jones, ed., Appleton's Handbook of American Travel, Southern Tour (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1874), p. 160.

¹³S.W. McCallie, State Geologist, Geological Survey of Georgia, A Preliminary Report on the Mineral Springs of Georgia, Bulletin No. 20 (Atlanta: State Printer, 1913), p. 9.

¹⁴The Georgia Journal and Messenger, Macon, Ga., June 5, 1850, p. 2, c. 4.

Kenneth M. Newman, ed., "Photographs of Prints of Virginia Springs," The Old Print Shop Portfolio, Vol. XXXVII, No. 2 (New York: 1976), p. 30.

(Original prints were done by Ed Beyer in Album of Virginia, 1858.)

Georgia's Health Resort for 100 Years, The Legend of the Healing Waters (Indian Springs: 1898). (Advertising brochure for the Wigwam Hotel.)

Carswell, The Savannah Morning News.

The Federal Union, June 30, 1835, p. 3, c. 5.

Von Abele, p. 120.

A 19th Century Photograph of the Indian Springs Hotel, Varner Collection.

¹⁵James F. Sulzby, Jr., Historic Alabama Hotels and Resorts (University of Alabama Press, 1960), pp. 4-5.

¹⁶Carswell, The Savannah Morning News.

¹⁷The Georgia Journal and Messenger, June 5, 1850, p. 2, c. 4.

¹⁸Ibid, May 5, 1846, p. 3, c. 4.

¹⁹Newman, p. 30.

²⁰Woodward, p. 26.

²¹Indian Springs Hotel Register, Varner Collection.

Joseph Addison Turner, A Diary, entry of June 7, 1860, "Moved family to Oconee Springs ... Stay at home most of the time and go to the Springs occasionally." Emory University, Atlanta, Ga.

Carswell, The Savannah Morning News.

Mary Eleanor Wickersham, "Omaha Springs," The Sandersville Progress, April 14, 1977, p. 9A, c. 1-6.

The Federal Union, May 29, 1845, p. 2, c. 2.

Woodward, p. 26.

²²Woodward, p. 27.

²³Timothy Harley, Southward Ho! Notes of a Tour To and Through the State of Georgia In the Winter 1885-86 (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1886), pp. 156-57.

²⁴The Federal Union, June 13, 1843, p. 2, c. 4.

²⁵The Georgia Journal and Messenger, June 5, 1850, p. 2, c. 4.

²⁶Ibid, May 26, 1832, p. 4, c. 5.

²⁷The Federal Union, June 3, 1856, p. 4, c. 6.

²⁸Ibid, June 30, 1835, p. 3, c. 5.

²⁹Carswell, The Savannah Morning News.

³⁰Adiel Sherwood, Gazeteer of Georgia; Containing a Particular Description of the State, Its Resources, Counties, Towns, Villages and Whatever is Usual in Statistical Works (Macon, Ga.: S. Boykin, 1860), pp. 168-69.

³¹Georgia's Health Resort for 100 Years...etc.

³²Ibid.

³³Charles J. Shelverton, Chairman, Publicity Committee of the City Council, "Interesting Developments at Austell," The City Builder. (From the Varner Collection, date and page number unknown.)

³⁴Letter of Elizabeth H. Reid to Josephine Varner, Turnwold Plantation, September 19, 1859, Varner Collection.

Unknown newspaper article dated August 16, 1888, Varner Collection.

³⁵The Georgia Journal and Messenger, May 28, 1831.

³⁶Interview with James Cornell, Jr., proprietor, Elder Hotel, Indian Springs, Ga., by the author, June 10, 1977.

³⁷The Federal Union, August 8, 1843, p. 4, c. 2.

³⁸Ibid, May 23, 1844, p. 3, c. 5.

³⁹Woodward, p. 26.

⁴⁰The Georgia Messenger, July 17, 1830, p. 4, c. 5.

⁴¹The Federal Union, June 3, 1856, p. 4, c. 6.

⁴²Carswell, The Savannah Morning News.

⁴³The Federal Union, June 3, 1856, p. 4, c. 6.

⁴⁴Ibid, July 29, 1856, p. 3, c. 3.

"Invitation to Attend the Grand Fancy Ball," Varner Collection. It reads: "To be given at Varner's Dancing Saloon, Indian Springs, on the evening of Wednesday, 31st, and Thursday, September 1, which you are most respectfully invited to attend.

⁴⁵The Telegraph and Messenger, Macon, Ga., July 19, 1885, p. 3, c. 7.

⁴⁶The Federal Union, June 3, 1856, p. 3, c. 3.

⁴⁷Jack Spalding, "Summer Once Meant Spring Time Here," The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, April 19, 1964. (From the files of the Historic Preservation Section.)

⁴⁸Carswell, The Savannah Morning News.

⁴⁹The Georgia Messenger, July 17, 1830, p. 4, c. 5.

⁵⁰Ibid, June 11, 1835, p. 3, c. 3.

⁵¹Ibid, May 9, 1829, p. 1, c. 5.

⁵²Sulzby, p. 5.

⁵³The Georgia Journal and Messenger, September 4, 1838.

⁵⁴Ibid, April 30, 1839.

⁵⁵Sulzby, p. 27.

⁵⁶Carswell, The Savannah Morning News.

⁵⁷"Bill of Fare for Varner's Hotel," Indian Springs Hotel, 1859, Varner Collection.

Letter of Emma P. Keith to Miss Joe Varner, Griffin, Varner Collection. Written in the 1870s.

⁵⁸Wickersham, The Sandersville Progress.

⁵⁹Interview with James Cornell, June 10, 1977.

⁶⁰The Georgia Messenger, Macon, Ga., June 27, 1833, p. 3, c. 4.

⁶¹The Federal Union, June 2, 1836, p. 3, c. 5.

⁶²The Georgia Journal and Messenger, April 30, 1839, p. 3, c. 6.

⁶³Ibid, April 30, 1840, p. 3, c. 6.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵The Federal Union, August 8, 1843, p. 4, c. 2.

⁶⁶The Georgia Journal and Messenger, June 5, 1850, p. 2, c. 4.

⁶⁷The Federal Union, June 3, 1856, p. 3, c. 5.

Letter of Miss Joe Varner to Jefferson M. Varner, June, 1862, Varner Collection.

The Empire State, Griffin, Ga., August 27, 1856, p. 3, c. 6, Varner Collection.

Letter of Miss Joe Varner to Forrest Varner, Indian Springs, February 28, 1928, Varner Collection.

The Georgia Journal and Messenger, April 27, 1857.

⁶⁸The Middle Georgia Argus, Jackson, Ga., April 28, 1883, p. 3, c. 2; February 28, 1884, p. 2, c. 3-4; July 28, 1885, p. 2, c. 3.

⁶⁹The Macon Telegraph, Macon, Ga., 1881. (From an undated copy of the article in Miss Joe Varner's scrapbook, Varner Collection.)

⁷⁰The Christian Index, Macon, Ga., September 13, 1894, p. 6, c. 3.

⁷¹Woodward, p. 27.

⁷²The Electric Health Resort, The Richmond Dispatch.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴The Federal Union, August 8, 1843, p. 4, c. 2.

⁷⁵Ibid, June 2, 1840, p. 3, c. 6.

⁷⁶Ibid, June 13, 1843, p. 2, c. 4.

⁷⁷Harley, pp. 156-57.

⁷⁸Sherwood, pp. 168-69.

⁷⁹The Christian Index, September 13, 1894, p. 6, c. 3.

PART II

THE INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL:
A CASE STUDY OF A 19TH-CENTURY WATERING PLACE

Chapter 1

THE INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL: A DESCRIPTION

The Indian Springs Hotel is located in Butts County, Georgia, on Georgia Highway 23. It is approximately five miles southeast of Jackson, the county seat, and 19 miles northeast of Forsyth, the county seat of Monroe County. It is situated on Lot 2 of the 1828 plat of the Indian Springs Reserve. The State of Georgia owns the hotel and two acres of Land Lot 2. Big Sandy Creek runs northwesterly through the area, forming a wide, rocky stream that is visible from the front lawn of the hotel. The area around the site is rolling, somewhat forested and quite scenic. Indian Springs State Park is located directly across the highway and contains 510 acres. It has been in existence since 1933, although the State has owned the Indian Spring and ten acres surrounding it since 1826, when it was ceded to the State by a treaty with the Creek Indians.

The village of Indian Springs is today a sleepy hamlet. There is little evidence of the town as it was in the 1850s when the Indian Springs Hotel was in its heyday or of the 1890s when seven major hotels dominated the scene. Of at least nine hotels that have stood in Indian Springs over the past 150 years, only the Indian Springs Hotel, the Elder Hotel and the Rock Castle remain.

The Indian Springs Hotel has not been used as a hotel for about 80 years. The numerous outbuildings that once covered Lots 2, 3, 12, 13 and 17 have long since vanished. It appears today as an old house, empty and somewhat dilapidated. Its grand history is unrecognizable. The age of the building is obvious, however. The architectural style, the handplaned

boards, wooden pegs and handmade bricks clearly indicate an early-19th-Century construction date.

It is today a two-story frame structure with exterior end chimneys. There is a third chimney in the center of the building facing in the opposite direction of the end chimneys which serves the center room and a rear shed section. The chimneys are brick and the foundation is stone. There are three main rooms on the first floor with a rear shed and five small end rooms that appear to have been made by enclosing a porch. The second floor consists of one large room on the south end and six small rooms on the north end. There is a wide hall on both floors. Throughout the building, 20th-Century partitions provide bath and closet spaces. A shed porch on the front facade is supported by square columns, thought to date to around the turn of the century. The front windows contain twelve-over-twelve lights. The building is presently painted yellow with green trim and green shutters.

The interior of the house as it stands today is shown in the 1975 photographs in this chapter, except that the furnishings have been removed. The architectural notes under each photograph are by Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, formerly the architectural historian for the Department of Natural Resources. The house consists of 18 rooms.

The Indian Springs Hotel was constructed around 1823. Each proprietor over the years claimed to have made extensive improvements to the building, but these claims were not recorded in most cases. That there have been major changes and additions is obvious upon careful scrutiny of the structure. However, an explanation here of these changes and the dates thereof would be mostly theoretical in nature, while more subtle changes that probably existed would only be evident to an experienced architect. A complete

architectural analysis of the building should be conducted to document the architectural development of the structure throughout its existence.

There is historical evidence to suggest that additions were made almost immediately after the building was constructed. The proprietor in 1825 advertised that he had made great additions to his house and kitchen.¹ The next year, a traveler passing through Indian Springs stated that there was a "...boarding house 74 feet long 40 wide -- shed 16 wide for Dining Room the whole length..."² In 1828, in an advertisement for the sale of the lots in the Indian Springs Reserve, the hotel was described as being "...74 feet by 50 feet with a kitchen and outhouses..."³ Not only are these two descriptions almost identical, they also agree with the measurements of the building today, excepting the small end rooms made when the end porches were enclosed. The house presently measures 74 feet from chimney to chimney and 56 feet from the front steps to the exterior wall of the rear shed. From these descriptions, it evident that additions to the length of the house were made by 1825. The discrepancy in the width given in these two descriptions may be accounted for by the inclusion of a porch in the measured width. The shed today is approximately 10 feet wide rather than 16. In any case, the hotel as it exists today is of the approximate size described in 1825 and 1828.

The chimneys are of brick and are said to be handmade. The foundation is of native stone. The construction of the building, including the masonry work, has been attributed to a man by the name of Hitchcock, although nothing is known of him.⁴

The rear shed was the dining room for the hotel throughout its years of operation.⁵ It was extended by 1835 on the north end by 12 feet, making it 86 feet long, and was said to have been extended on the south end in

1851 by Edward Varner.⁶ After 1900, the shed was partitioned to provide additional sleeping rooms to accommodate the numerous members of the Varner family when they visited there each summer.⁷

The present porch of the hotel is a one-story shed supported by square columns, which was constructed in the early 20th Century.⁸ Miss Joe Varner once stated that there had been four porches on the house during its history. An early photograph, thought to have been taken in the 1870s or 1880s, shows a two-story portico supported by slender, square columns that extended around the south end of the house, with no landing at the second story. It appears that the portico had extended around the north end also but had been partially enclosed by the time of the photograph. Based on what is known of the history of the hotel, it seems likely that this two-story portico was added prior to 1860. After that time, the hotel declined in popularity, and the surviving Varners who operated it were not in a financial position to make such a change in the house.

Another portico existed by 1835. An advertisement in The Southern Banner for that year stated that there was "...one hundred sixty five feet of piazza, twelve feet wide...." In the upper story, there was "a piazza of the same extent as below."⁹ The two-story portico on three sides of the building was certainly typical of the "summer-resort pattern" that was popular in 19th Century mineral spring hotels. If an earlier type of portico existed prior to the one described in 1935, it is not evident from the historical data available.

A late-19th-Century postcard of the hotel also shows that it was painted white with dark-green shutters on the windows. At what point in the history of the building it was painted cannot be determined historically.

It is known that in 1883 it was painted. Accounts of this were chronicled in the Middle Georgia Argus, but these did not specify whether it was being repainted or just receiving its first coat.¹⁰ That it was painted by 1850 seems to be a reasonable assumption. The accommodations and services of the hotel were greatly improved by the proprietors of the 1840s and 1850s, so it seems that painting the house would have been a natural step toward improving the hotel, the most fashionable watering place in Georgia.

During the hotel years, the downstairs room on the south end was the hotel office.¹¹ The registration desk, said to be the original, is still intact. It was in this room that the Treaty of 1825 was signed. The other two large rooms downstairs were parlors. In 1835, the upper floor consisted of 18 rooms.¹² Today, there are only seven rooms.

Originally, the upstairs rooms were guest rooms and family quarters. In addition, in 1834, Leander Erwin constructed a one-story guest annex on the north end of the house which was 200 feet long, contained 24 rooms and had a piazza running the full length.¹³ In 1851, the Varners either added to this an additional eight rooms or replaced it with an entirely new building. Miss Joe Varner remembered the guest annex as being four wings, two stories each, with four rooms on each floor, joined to the main hotel building by a covered walkway.¹⁴ Miss Joe, who was 90 years of age when she gave this description, may have been mistaken about the exact design of the annex. However, if hers was accurate, it seems unlikely that the Varner annex was the same one described by Erwin. Descendants still living, who visited the hotel in the early-20th Century, recall a building on that location that was put together with wooden pegs.¹⁵

On the south end of the house on Lot 17 once stood the "dancing saloon."¹⁶ It was constructed in 1854 by the Varners,¹⁷ and was a two-story structure, or actually one story on a raised basement. The lower floor was a tavern.¹⁸ There had been a ballroom in the 1840s also, but its location is not known.¹⁹

A stable for the hotel had been constructed by 1840 and probably earlier. A deed states that it was on Lots 12 and 13,²⁰ north of the guest annex. It is also known that a billiard house existed in the 1840s, but no location is given.²¹ Lot 3 was also part of the hotel complex and was known as the "mill lot," as a mill had been constructed there in the 1820s. It later burned and was not replaced until 1874, and this structure was demolished by the State when Georgia Highway 23 was improved in the mid-20th Century.²²

Other necessary structures were probably located behind the main hotel building, annex and ballroom. Included in these structures should have been privies, a smokehouse, kitchen, and guest cottages. Water for the hotel came from a spring at the foot of the hill behind the hotel. It has long since dried up and was replaced with a well around 1870.²³ Around the hotel during the season could also be seen "cloth houses" or tents which many of the patrons of the spring preferred to use. Further information on the existence and location of structures that are no longer standing might be available through other research methods, such as archaeology.

The appearance of the hotel grounds before 1850 is not known. Miss Joe Varner later stated that in the 1850s, the front lawn was a bed of grass that sloped slightly from the house, but that the trees there today were planted by her sister, Amanda,²⁴ probably after 1865. There were beds of flowers around the hotel throughout the Varner occupation belonging to Amanda Varner, and she was particularly fond of her roses. There

must have been a small pond nearby also, for many visitors to the hotel wrote in their correspondence of the presence of Amanda's ducks. She also kept chickens and a cow, as well as having a vegetable garden.²⁵

Adjacent to the Indian Springs Hotel ballroom lot on the south end was the McIntosh House, erected in 1846 and burned in 1883.²⁶ North of and across the road from the Indian Springs Hotel was the Elder House, first constructed in 1851.²⁷ A later Elder Hotel, built in 1903, is still in operation slightly to the south of the first structure.²⁸ The Wigwam Hotel, built in 1890, and the Foy Hotel, built in 1884, were built directly across the road from the Indian Springs Hotel. The Calumet Hotel, built ca. 1890, stood on the north end of the Indian Springs Hotel.²⁹ The town of Indian Springs had many commercial structures in the 19th Century, which were located south of the hotels along Georgia Highway 23, but few of these remain today.

Architecturally, the main hotel building has changed very little since the 1820s. There is no physical evidence of the numerous structures that once comprised the Indian Springs Hotel complex. Yet, the hotel is unique and, therefore, extremely significant to the history of this state. It is the only known ante-bellum mineral-spring hotel in Georgia still extant, and its history yields much data on the culture, society and architecture of Georgia throughout the 19th Century.

Chapter 1: The Indian Springs Hotel: A Description

- ¹ The Southern Recorder, Milledgeville, Ga., May 24, 1825, p. 3, c.4.
- ² Connally-Brown Collection, Travel Account of Joseph Grisham May-June, 1826, p. 1, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.
- ³ The Savannah Georgian, April 22, 1828, as cited in Sherry L. Boatright's The McIntosh Inn and Its Place in Creek Indian History (Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1975), p. 90.
- ⁴ Briefs, Reminiscences of Miss Joe Varner, as told to her nephew, Paul J. Varner, ca. 1925, Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ The Southern Banner, Athens, Ga., August 20, 1835, p. 3, c. 6.
The Journal and Messenger, Macon, Ga., May 21, 1851, p. 3, c. 5.
- ⁷ Interview with Mrs. Corneil Varner Davidson of Macon, Ga., 1975, by Sherry L. Boatright in The McIntosh Inn... etc.
- ⁸ Lucian Lamar Knight, Georgia's Landmarks, Memorials and Legends, Vol. II (Atlanta: Byrd Printing Company, 1914), p. 611.
- ⁹ The Southern Banner, August 20, 1835, p. 3, c. 6.
- ¹⁰ Middle Georgia Argus, Jackson, Ga., April 13, 1882, p. 2, c. 1.
- ¹¹ Interview with Mrs. Corneil Varner Davidson by Sherry L. Boatright.
Interview with Mr. Jesse Newsom, Sandersville, Ga., October 28, 1977, by the author.
- ¹² Briefs, Varner Collection.
The Southern Banner, August 20, 1835, p. 3, c. 6.
- ¹³ The Journal and Messenger, June 5, 1830, p. 5, c. 4.
The Southern Banner, August 20, 1835, p. 3, c. 6.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., May 21, 1851, p. 3, c. 5.
Briefs, Varner Collection.
- ¹⁵ Telephone interview with Mr. Lamar S. White, July, 1977, by the author.
- ¹⁶ Briefs, Varner Collection.

Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book K, pp. 401 and 29; Deed Book M, p. 377.

17 The Journal and Messenger, August 2, 1854.

18 Briefs, Varner Collection.

19 Rules and Regulations of the Indian Springs Hotel, June 1, 1846, Varner Collection.

20 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book E, p. 266.

21 Ibid, Deed Book F, p. 109.

22 H.M. Edge, Souvenir History of Indian Springs, The Indian Springs Echo (Indian Springs, Ga., 1874), p. 5.

Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book G, p. 442; Deed Book P, p. 182.

Middle Georgia Argus, May 18, 1882.

Interview with Mr. Earl Varner, Swainsboro, Ga., June 15, 1977, by the author.

23 Briefs, Varner Collection.

24 Ibid.

25 Letter of Valeria B. Lamar of Macon, Ga., to Mrs. Cynthia Varner, June 11, 1879, Varner Collection.

Letter of Emma P. Keith, Griffin, Ga., to Miss Joe Varner, July 23, ca. 1870s, Varner Collection.

Interview with Mr. Jesse Newsom, Sandersville, Ga., October 28, 1977, by the author.

Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1861, Varner Collection

26 The Journal and Messenger, May 5, 1846.

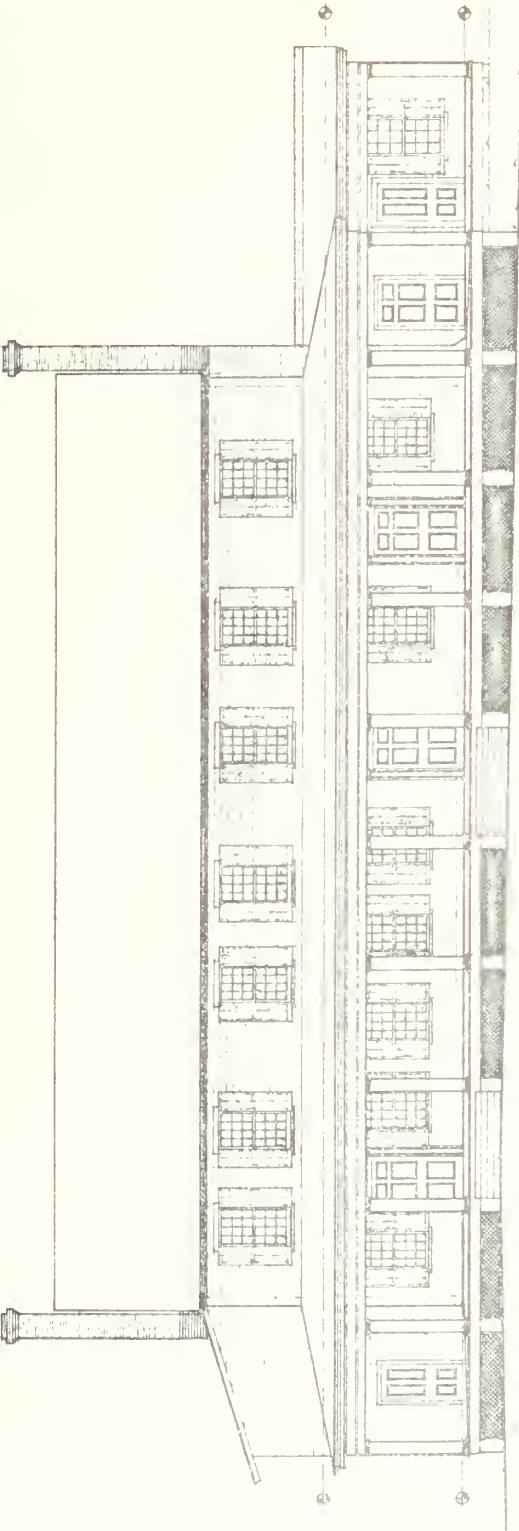
Middle Georgia Argus, June 9, 1883, p. 3, c. 2, and April 21, 1883, p. 3, c. 3.

27 The Journal and Messenger, July 9, 1851, p. 1, c. 4.

28 Interview with Mr. James Cornell, proprietor of the Elder Hotel, Indian Springs, Ga., June 10, 1977, by the author.

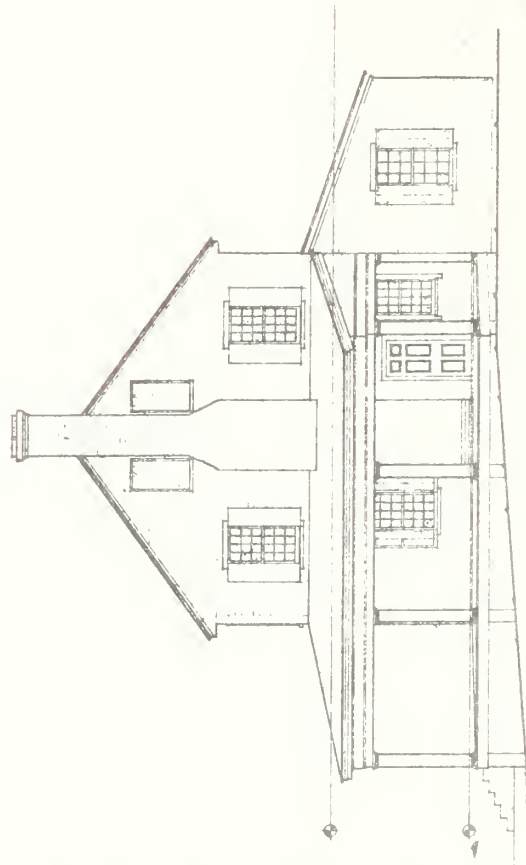
29 Ibid.

Interview with Ms. Lois McMichael, Jackson, Ga., March 31, 1978, by the author. Ms. McMichael has contributed research to the forthcoming Hesty of Butts County and is currently editing the final manuscript.



FRONT ELEVATION

SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"



RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION

SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"

BIGGERS-SCARBROUGH-NEAL-CRISP & CLARK
ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS
A.I.A. COLUMBUS, GEORGIA N.S.P.E.

INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL
BUTTS COUNTY, GEORGIA

SHEET

JOB NO.

CHECKED

DRAWN

DATE

SET

REVISIONS

REVISIONS

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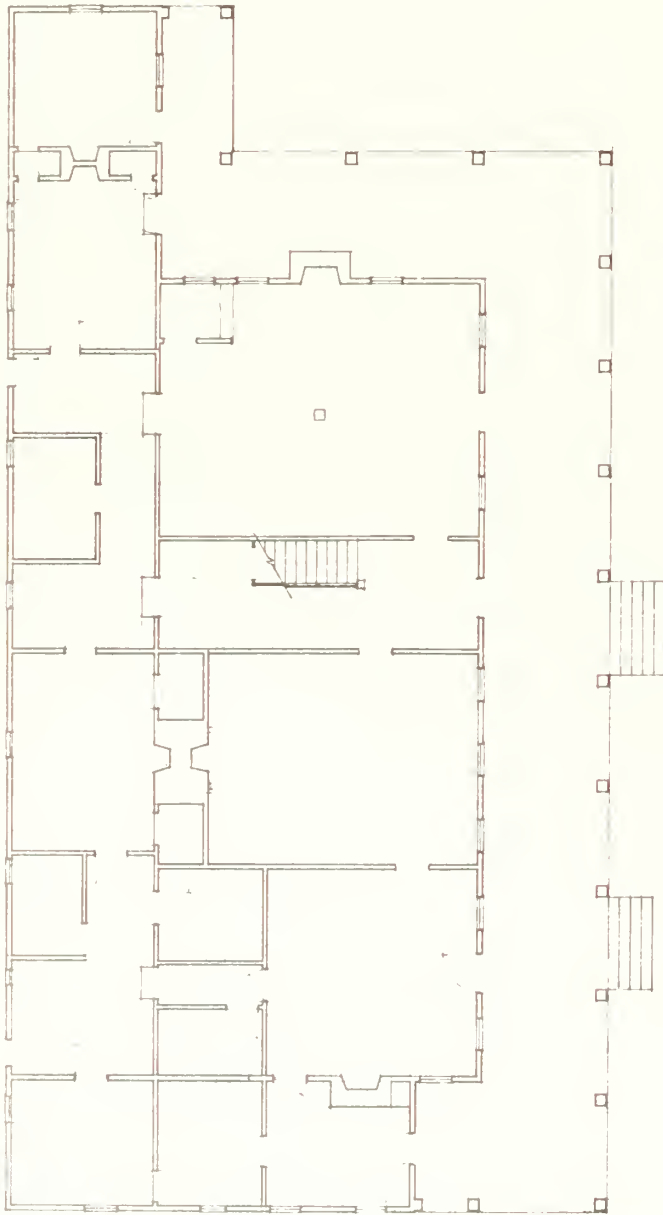
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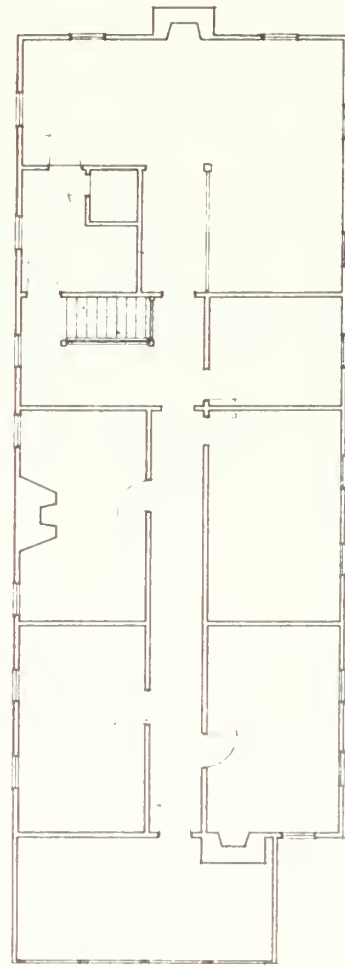


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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"

BIGGERS-SCARBROUGH-NEAL-CRISP & CLARK
ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS
A.I.A. COLUMBUS, GEORGIA N.S.P.E.

INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL

BALTIMORE COUNTY, GEORGIA





Photograph of the Indian Springs Hotel as it appears today.



Rear view of the Indian Springs Hotel



Photograph showing foundation materials and access to underground basement.



Photograph of hallway with interior stairs, horizontal siding and chair rail.



Rear and side view of the Indian Springs Hotel



Photograph of presently-called "office room" mantel. The early design date is substantiated by the simple design and the height of the freize and shelf.



Photograph of presently-called "bedroom." Again, an early type of mantel in a simple, primitive manner in which the pilasters support the shelf and not the freize.



Front porch view showing simple entablature-framed door and twelve-over-twelve windows.



Close-up view of door design



Both of the mantel designs shown in this photograph and the one on the following page show a sophisticated designer. The variety of mantel designs of such an early date and in such an undeveloped area is significant.



Mantel design showing a sophisticated designer, as mentioned on the previous page.



Photograph of dining room. Note the panelled wainscoting, beaded chair and door trim, Adamesque design mantel with three-part frieze and shelf supported by fluted pilasters. This type of design, for rural areas, is very sophisticated.



Photograph of dining room showing wainscoting and six-panel door designs.

Chapter 2

THE FIRST TWO DECADES

It has been established historically that the Indian Springs Hotel was constructed ca. 1823, but that the Indian Spring itself had been resorted to by both Indians and Georgians for some years previous to this date. An item in The Georgian on June 29, 1820, announcing the discovery of a spring near Ruckersville, stated that it "...is thought by many to be equal to the Indian Springs which has for a considerable period been in high repute."¹ A Souvenir History of Indian Springs records that the Indians had been coming to the Indian Springs for many decades prior to 1800 for the benefits of the medicinal waters. It further states that the first white men came to the springs around 1792 and that Creek Indian Chief William McIntosh built a cabin there ca. 1800.² It is certain that people came to the springs in large numbers long before a public house was constructed on the site.

Needless to say, the accommodations prior to 1823 were somewhat primitive. A gentleman visiting the Indian Springs in 1823, before the hotel opened, reported to The Georgian:

The country about this place is very hilly, rocky, romantically wild and thinly inhabited. The unusual sickliness of the surrounding country, has rendered the Spring a resort for such numbers that the accomodations [sic] are by no means equal to the influx, and I am now writing in a little log hovel with fifty avenues which admit indiscriminately, hornets, flies, spiders, showers, wind and sunshine ... The mineral spring is situated about a quarter of a mile from the tents as they are termed.³

This seems to be a rather unhealthy site for a health resort. Yet it

was to this place that United States Commissioners had come in 1820 and 1821 to treat with the Creek Indians,⁴ and it was here that people flocked to drink of the health-giving waters, regardless of the lack of adequate accommodations in the days before the Indian Springs Hotel.

The Treaty of 1821 reserved to the Creek Nation 1,000 acres, with the Indian Spring at its center, along with 640 acres on the Ocmulgee River. Chief William McIntosh purchased these two tracts from the other Creek chiefs, including his improvements thereon in 1825.⁵

The hotel must have been constructed during the winter of 1823-24, as the account of August, 1823, previously quoted, indicates that it was not in operation at that time. Another item from The Georgian, dated August of the following year, supports this supposition:

They [the waters] have been resorted to at this season much more than at any former one. About two weeks since a census of the visitors then present was taken, and they amounted to more than 500; and two or three days after it was supposed to have increased to 700. The proprietor has made every exertion to accommodate his numerous customers, and has succeeded as far as could be expected considering the very short time since he commenced his establishment.⁶

The proprietor referred to here was not William McIntosh, the owner, but was Joel Bailey, a friend and ally of McIntosh to whom McIntosh had leased the portion of the Indian Springs Reserve on which the hotel stood.⁷ [Note: The most notable occurrence at the Indian Springs Hotel during the McIntosh-Bailey occupation was the signing of the Treaty of Indian Springs of 1825. The events leading to the treaty and the aftermath of it are fully discussed in the report by Sherry L. Boatright, entitled The McIntosh Inn and Its Place in Creek Indian History, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1975. Since this report is a sequel to

the Boatright report, there is no need to provide any further documentation of this event. Instead, remarks relating to the McIntosh-Bailey occupation of the hotel will relate only to Joel Bailey and the hotel as a watering place.]

In May of 1825, the following advertisement appeared in The Southern Recorder of Milledgeville:

Indian Spring, May 1825. The subscriber still remains at the Mineral Spring so well known as a place of health and pleasure where he has made considerable improvements for the reception of company this season. The average number of persons for the last season was about Eight Hundred, and he thinks he will be able to accommodate Twelve Hundred much better than he did the company last season from the great convenience on which his kitchen is constructed, it is very convenient to the dining room, and built on the same plan as those of the Saratoga and Ballstown Springs. From the great addition he has made on his house and kitchen, together with his experience in business will enable him to give general satisfaction to all that will favor him with their company, either for health or pleasure. His table will be furnished with the best the country affords, and his Bar with the best of liquors and wine, porter, beer, etc. His stables will be furnished with the best of forage and an attentive ostler. He has also a large supply of the newest, fashionable and best style of Staple and Fancy Goods and Groceries of all kinds. He has also about fifty tents which he will rent from twelve and a half to twenty five cents per day....

Joel Baley [sic]⁸

Accommodations certainly appeared to be more comfortable at Indian Springs than those confronting travelers in 1823 and 1824.

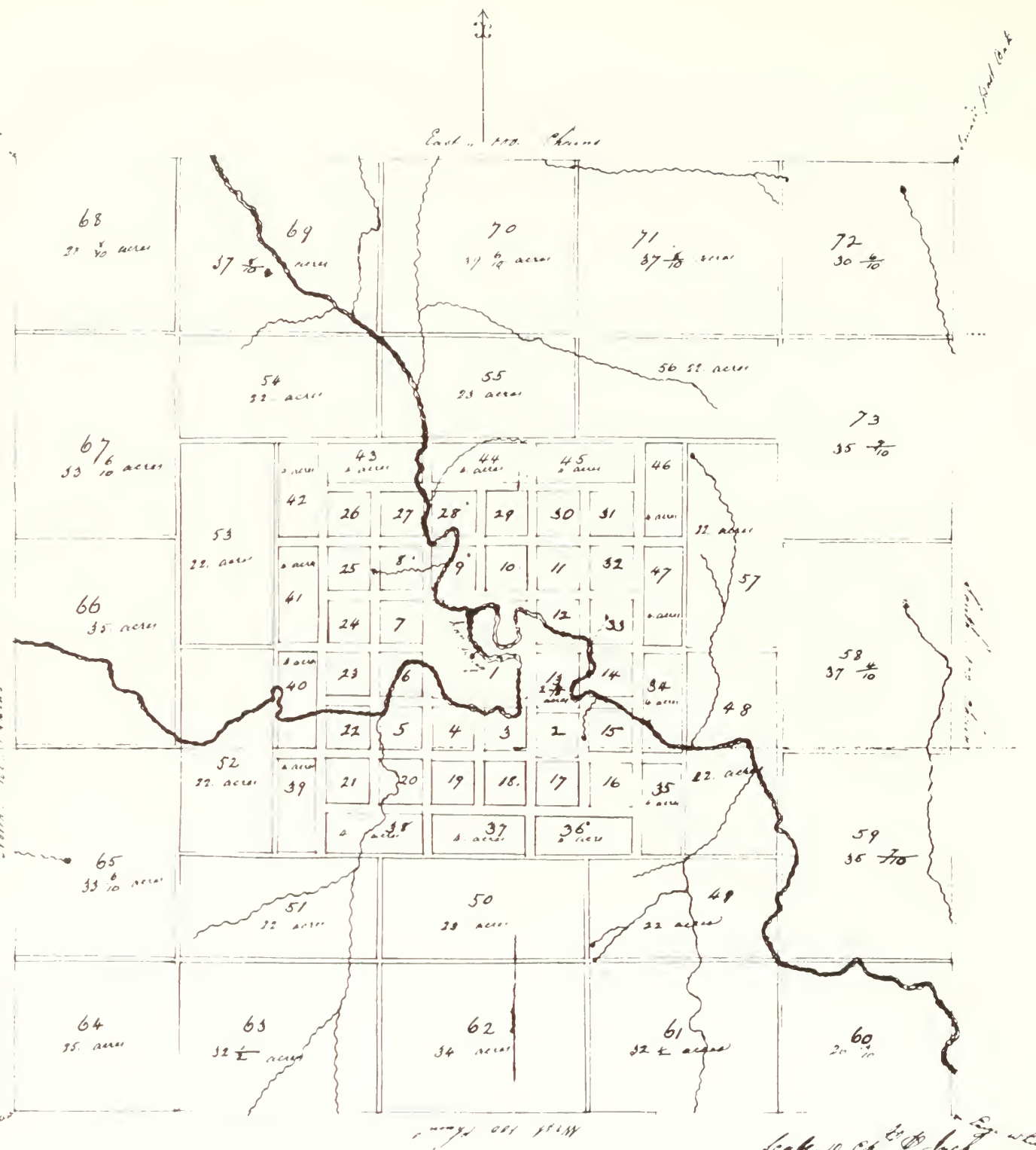
Even in these early days, the reputation of the springs had spread to neighboring South Carolina. Joseph Grisham and Armstead Burt left Pendleton, South Carolina, on May 2, 1826, arriving at Indian Springs on May 5. Grisham, in his travel account, described the scene there, giving particular details of the Indian Springs Hotel:

One spring running out of a steep knoll in the fork of Sandy Creek 7 miles from Cargill Ferry 4 miles from Jackson the seat of Justice of Butts County - Boarding House 74 feet long 40 wide -- shed 16 wide for Dining Room the whole length - a great number of cabins about 100 round the spring -- They rent from 1 to 1/2 per day. There is a very handsome mill seat on the S. fork of Sandy Creek -- The water appears to be very strongly impregnated with sulphur and nitrogen and said to contain magnesia - covers all diseases except dropsey and consumption! Flint Treaty held here summer of 1821. Indian Spring Treaty same place February 1825.⁹ [Note: Butts County was created by Legislative Act on December 24, 1825, from Henry and Monroe counties. Jackson was designated the county seat. The town was named for Andrew Jackson and the county for Captain Samuel Butts, who served in the War of 1812.¹⁰]

Unfortunately, another traveler never had the chance to test the miraculous powers of the Indian Spring. The Reverend James Sweat left Beaufort District, South Carolina, over 200 miles distant, in 1825 to go to the springs to recover his health, but died en route.¹¹

Little is known of Joel Bailey's life prior to his appearance on the scene at Indian Springs. He was in Jasper County at the end of 1821, where, on December 19 of that year he married Sarah Smith.¹² He was a participant in the unsuccessful treaty proceedings at Broken Arrow in December of 1824 at the request of Chief McIntosh.¹³ With regard to his role in the Treaty of 1825, he stated that he had not participated "in consequence of his engagements, being crowded with company,"¹⁴ and that he was "keeping a public house at which the United States Commissioners put up, as well as persons here at the time, entertaining the Indians also, as well as the Indian Agent Col. Crowell."¹⁵ Reports on the treaty proceedings show that Bailey was paid \$4,073.00 by the Commissioners for expenses during the treaty period.¹⁶

The Treaty of Indian Springs of 1825 was annulled, and another treaty of January 24, 1826, was approved. Then, on December 27, 1827, a



Georgia, Bull County. The above plan is a correct representation of the Plat of the Village at the Indian Springs as laid out by the Commissioners. March 1828. Hugh L. Macdonald, Surveyor.

1828 Plat of Indian Springs as laid out by commissioners of the State of Georgia. Original in the Surveyor General Department, State of Georgia.

special act of the Georgia Legislature provided for the sale at public auction of lots in the McIntosh Reserve, which, by this treaty, became the property of the State of Georgia.¹⁷ With this turn of events, Joel Bailey's days of association with the Indian Springs Hotel were numbered. The lots in the reserve were advertised on March 8, 1828, to be sold at auction on April 22 of that year.¹⁸ The advertisement included a description of the Indian Springs Hotel that was almost identical to that of Grisham in 1826. It read:

...the two acre lot No. 2 on it a large house 74 feet by 50 feet, built for a tavern, with a kitchen and outhouses ... there are also other lots that have houses or summer tents, calculated for rent or occupancy the ensuing season....¹⁹

When the sale was over, Lot No. 2, with the hotel and adjoining Lot No. 13, had a new owner, Baldwin Fluker of Washington County. These lots, with improvements, were valued at \$4,350.²⁰

But Joel Bailey was not to leave Indian Spring. Instead of purchasing his old establishment, he opted to give it up and open a new hotel at the springs. Based on the large number of visitors to the springs in previous years, he had reason to believe that a new hotel was needed and that it would flourish.

The new hotel was known as the Mountain Spout Retreat. Located one-half mile south of the spring, it was said to accommodate 150 people when the first advertisement appeared in The Georgia Messenger on May 9, 1829.²¹ His claims in that item and in one for May of 1830 show that Indian Springs was beginning to take on the flair of a true watering place -- seeking to provide patrons with more than board and mineral water by catering to their need for recreation and amusement. Bailey

stated that his table was supplied with the country's best, including plenty of cornbread, cool milk and butter and fresh vegetables from his garden. His bar was supplied with the choicest liquors, and he maintained a good hack to take his guests to the spring three times a day at no charge. There was a first-class piano, flute, flageolet and harmonican harp for the young people. And he provided a blacksmith, general store, a two-story hotel building, corn, fodder and tents to rent.²² Additionally, Bailey was the agent at the springs for a stage line that ran from Macon to Indian Springs via Forsyth each week.²³

The Census of 1830 for Butts County reveals that Joel Bailey's residence was the next residence after that of L.A. Erwin, who was by then operating the Indian Springs Hotel. In that year, Bailey had 53 slaves on the premises -- 25 males and 28 females. From the census, though only heads of households are identified by name, it appears that he had his wife and two children residing with him along with six adult white males who could have been guests or employees.²⁴

The life of the Mountain Spout Retreat was short, however. In June of 1831, it was offered for sale or rent. Apparently Bailey was no longer on the premises, because the advertisements were run by J.T. Rowland.²⁵ After 1831, no items in either the Macon or Milledgeville papers mention the Mountain Spout Retreat. Possibly it deteriorated or burned, for the Indian Springs Hotel is the only establishment that is in evidence between 1831 and 1840. Joel Bailey was deceased by 1832.²⁶ Before his death, he had sold all of his property, including numerous tracts of land in Butts County and a large number of slaves,²⁷ and he left no estate.²⁸ It appears, based on this, that he was in financial difficulty in 1830-31 and he was forced to sell his land to pay his debts, leaving

his widow and orphans with no assets.

Meanwhile, the Indian Springs Hotel was still in operation. At the 1828 auction, Baldwin Fluker had purchased 11 lots in the reserve, including Lot No. 2, with the hotel on it, and Lot No. 13, adjoining the hotel on the north side. While he paid \$4,350.00 for Lots 2 and 13, the other nine cost a total of \$977.00, indicating that there were extensive improvements on the hotel lots.²⁹

Fluker owned the hotel for only nine months at the most, as he died on January 25, 1829.³⁰ What little biographical data is available on him suggests that he did not own the hotel at the time of his death and that during his tenure of possession, he had little or nothing to do with the operation of it. Born September 18, 1772, to David and Jemima Fluker of Bute County, North Carolina,³¹ in 1813 Fluker was living in Washington County, Georgia, where in that year, he became Justice of the Peace, serving until 1817.³² He was still living in Washington County in 1820, and the census for that year shows that he owned a total of 4,268-1/4 acres of land in five counties, including a plantation in Washington County and three lots in Macon.³³ The Washington Tax Digest of 1825 shows that he was still residing there and owned 5,000 acres in Bibb, Henry, Laurens, Telfair, Twiggs and Washington counties, along with 57 slaves and personal property.³⁴ His estate papers, filed in Bibb County, where he died, contain information on his Washington County plantation. There, he had 46 slaves, while two slaves were in Bibb County.³⁵ Both the 1820 Census and the Fluker estate records confirm that he was married to Sarah Q. Fluker, by whom he had four children: Robert O., Baldwin M.M., Rebecca and Ann E. At his death, the property was divided equally among them.³⁶

Persons purchasing land in the Indian Springs Reserve were required

to make a down-payment followed by several installments. When the installments were completed, they received a deed or grant to the property. There is no grant extant from the State of Georgia to Fluker. Either his death ended the payments and the property reverted to the State to be regranted, or he sold it. Whether the property went directly to the official grantee, John Nisbet,³⁷ or whether it changed hands a number of times, finally being sold to Nisbet, cannot be determined. Newspapers of the day verify that, during Fluker's ownership, the hotel was run by Israel Keith,³⁸ and afterwards, even after Nisbet made final payment on it in 1834, it was run by Leander A. Erwin.³⁹ It appears, therefore, that Fluker leased the property to Keith. Shortly thereafter, it was sold to John Nisbet of Clarke County. Nisbet was acquainted with Leander Erwin, who was also of Clarke County.⁴⁰ Nisbet, like Fluker, did not operate the hotel.

Newspaper advertisements from 1830 to 1835 show that Leander Erwin was the proprietor of the Indian Springs Hotel.⁴¹ In 1838, Nisbet executed a bond on the hotel to a Morris Matthews,⁴² who then assigned the bond to Henry Dillon.⁴³ Henry Dillon made payments to Nisbet, and after Nisbet's death, to the Nisbet estate. Finally, in 1844, Dillon obtained complete title to the Indian Springs Hotel.⁴⁴ Although the transfer of the hotel property is vague with regard to Fluker, it is clear that John Nisbet had purchased it by 1830 and owned it until 1839, when he sold it to Henry Dillon. Dillon advertised the hotel in 1839, and the Census of 1840 for Butts County places Dillon there as an innkeeper.⁴⁵

These early innkeepers and owners left little record of their lives. Israel Keith is the most elusive. He was residing in Wilkes County in

1818-19 and served in the militia there.⁴⁶ During the summer of 1828, he advertised the Indian Springs Hotel, but he is not listed in the 1830 Census Index for Georgia.⁴⁷ Advertisements for the hotel appeared in The Georgia Messenger of Macon and The Federal Union of Milledgeville during the summer of 1828. Keith stated that he had taken the buildings formerly occupied by Colonel Bailey at the Indian Springs.⁴⁸ His rates were:

Man per day	\$1.00
Longer than ten days	.75
Horse per day	.75
Longer than ten days	.50
Breakfast	.37-1/2
Dinner	.50
Horse Feed	.37-1/2
Lodging	.25
Servants half price ⁴⁹	

Keith described the premises as follows:

...as a place of fashionable resort, cited for health or amusement, the Indian Springs stand unrivalled by any such place in the State. The waters have acquired deserved celebrity in the prevention and cure of diseases, as will be attested by many thousands who have visited the place and witnessed their medicinal virtues. The country immediately surrounding the Spring is healthy and romantic; and from the number and respectability [sic] of the Company who annually visit the Springs, will be found an agreeable as well as healthful residence, during the summer months.

The Buildings have undergone thorough repairs and extensive arrangements are made and making by the present occupant for the accommodations of all who may visit the place. His charges will be moderate, and his fares as good as the country will afford and he hopes, from the pains taken and the expense incurred, to be able to give general satisfaction.⁵⁰

The season of 1829 remains something of a mystery. There were no advertisements run that year. One may suppose that Israel Keith had met

an untimely death or had left the area suddenly, possibly due to the owner's, Fluker's, death in 1829. The property, therefore, was not sold or leased to a new proprietor in time to open for the season. Whatever the reason, the lack of advertising for this hotel and the abundance of items regarding its only competitor in the area, the Mountain Spout Retreat, indicate that the Indian Springs Hotel was closed during the season of 1829.

By the following year, however, the Indian Springs Hotel had a new owner and a new proprietor, and the season of 1830 saw the doors again open to the public. Although the new owner, John Nisbet, did not receive full title to the property until 1834,⁵¹ the fact that his friend, Leander A. Erwin, was the proprietor in 1830⁵² indicates that Nisbet had purchased it by that date.

John Nisbet was a prominent citizen of Athens, Clarke County, Georgia. Born on April 3, 1781,⁵³ he came to Athens from Statesville, Iredell County, North Carolina, in 1823.⁵⁴ He brought with him his wife, Harriet Cooper Nisbet; their three children, Thomas Cooper, Mary Ann and Sarah Evaline; and his brother, Dr. James Nisbet.⁵⁵ Two other children were born to the Nisbets in Athens, Margaret Johns and Harriet.⁵⁶

John Nisbet served on the board of directors of the Georgia Railroad Company,⁵⁷ and as director of the Athens branch of the Bank of the State of Georgia.⁵⁸ He, along with Leander Erwin and others, was an incorporator of the First Presbyterian Church of Athens in 1823.⁵⁹ With Augustus Clayton, William Dearing and Abraham Walker, Nisbet began the Athens Manufacturing Company, a cotton mill which began operation in 1830⁶⁰ but burned in 1834.⁶¹ He and Dearing built the Athens Factory.⁶² When he died, his estate included stock in the Athens Factory valued at \$20,500

and stock in the Georgia Railroad valued at \$40,300.⁶³

Nisbet received title to the Indian Springs Hotel, including Lots 2 and 13, on September 16, 1834.⁶⁴ At his death, his estate included a note on Dillon and Waters for \$2,000,⁶⁵ presumably for money owed on the hotel, since Dillon by that time was proprietor of the hotel. Also, the Nisbet estate listed expenses for several trips to Butts County by the executor.⁶⁶ John Nisbet died on November 20, 1841, and is buried in Oconee Hill Cemetery in Athens.⁶⁷

Leander A. Erwin was in Athens prior to Nisbet's arrival. He had married Elizabeth B. Marrable on September 5, 1816, in Clarke County, and he appears in 1817 as the administrator of the estate of John Marrable in that county.⁶⁹ Still in Athens in 1823, he, along with John Nisbet and others, incorporated the First Presbyterian Church there.⁷⁰ While in Athens, he was an innkeeper. Hull, in his Annals of Athens, Georgia, stated that in 1830 "the crack hotel of the place" was kept by Leander Erwin.⁷¹

It is clear from newspaper accounts that Erwin left Athens permanently some time in 1830.⁷² He then began to divide his time between Macon, where he ran Erwin's Hotel, a three-story building on Walnut Street,⁷³ and Indian Springs, spending the winter months in Macon but returning to the springs for the "season."⁷⁴ His endeavors in Macon did not meet with great success, and in June of 1833, he offered for sale "his tavern in Macon due to recent misfortunes."⁷⁵ It did not sell that year or the next, for throughout 1833 and 1834, it was still advertised as being open, though he had procured proprietors to run it for him.⁷⁶ The year 1833 brought personal misfortune as well, as Elizabeth Marrable Erwin died in Macon on January 21 of that year.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the

Indian Springs Hotel continued in operation under Erwin from 1830 to 1835, and even appeared to flourish during those years, sounding even more like a typical 19th-Century watering place than in the previous decade. In his first year there, Erwin added 24 rooms and advertised in the Savannah Georgian, Augusta Courier, Georgia Journal and Athenian.⁷⁸ His rates for that year were:

Man per day	\$1.00	
Longer than a month	.75	
Breakfast or supper	.37-1/2	
Dinner	.50	
Lodging	.12-1/2	
Children and servants half price		
Horse per day	.75	
Longer than a month	.50	
Horse feed	.37-1/2	79

Erwin's 24-room annex was described in the 1835 advertisement for the sale of the Indian Springs Hotel. It noted that the main building had "...adjoining, a building, one story high, two hundred feet in length, containing twenty-four bedrooms, with a piazza the entire length of the building...."⁸⁰ This building stood until at least 1850 at which time it was either enlarged or replaced by the Varners.

In 1830, according to the census for Georgia, Leander A. Erwin and wife Elizabeth were living in Butts County and were in their 30s. They apparently resided at the hotel. In addition, there appear to have been five children, three boys and two girls, and it also listed three white males between the ages of 20 and 30 who may have been boarders or employees. Erwin had 17 slaves on the premises, including 11 males and six females, and also one male free person of color.⁸¹ He also owned several tracts of land in Butts County, including Lots 29, 30 and 45 in the Indian Springs Reserve.⁸²

The advertisements run by Erwin from 1830 to 1833 are concise and to the point, unlike those of his competitors at other springs during the same period. But by 1834 and 1835, he had begun to elaborate on the facilities of the hotel, possibly due to improvements made during his first three years. His advertisement for 1832 simply states, "The subscriber having returned to the Indian Spring his establishment at that place is now open and ready for the reception and accommodation of boarders and visitors the present season."⁸³ By 1835, Erwin was using the jargon of the day:

Indian Springs

Leander A. Erwin, announces to the public, that he continues to occupy this well known establishment.

He has incurred considerable expense in extending the improvements and enlarging the means of accommodating his guests.

His bar is supplied with excellent wines and his kitchen has the service of the first cooks in the State.

Neither has he forgot the amusement of those who may favor him with their company. Some well selected books, a fine Piano Forte, Chess and Back-Gammon Boards, besides a good performer on the Violin will always be at the command of his company.⁸⁴

It would seem that Erwin was attempting to give his establishment that air of elegance for which the 19th-Century watering places in other states were noted. But 1835 was Erwin's last year as proprietor of the Indian Springs Hotel. In August of 1835, he advertised it for sale and in June of the following year, James A. Nisbet, probably John Nisbet's brother, placed this advertisement in The Georgia Messenger of Macon:

Indian Springs Hotel For Sale or Rent

The late disturbances in Alabama have created a great demand for the opening of this celebrated House.

A great bargain may be had by applying to
 James A. Nisbet⁸⁵
 June 2

An attempt has been made to discover the circumstances surrounding this turn of events. There are no further advertisements for Erwin either at Indian Springs or Macon after 1835. He does not appear in the 1840 Census of Georgia. At some point, he left the state and died in Cado Parish, Louisiana, on November 10, 1845.⁸⁶ So, for the second time in the 13 years since the Indian Springs Hotel was built, the building stood vacant throughout the "season" of 1836. Nisbet, still the owner, was trying to sell or rent it, and these are the only advertisements for the hotel which appeared that year.

By February of 1837, John Nisbet had found a buyer, and another character of mystery had come to operate the Indian Springs Hotel,⁸⁷ by the name of Morris Matthews. His tenure was short, however, for on June 25, 1838, his obituary in The Macon Telegraph reads: "On Sunday, the 17th instant, of the cholera morbus, Morris Matthews, the enterprising proprietor of the Indian Springs Hotel, aged 47 years."⁸⁸ His wife, Edna A. Matthews, survived him,⁸⁹ but she did not complete the payments to Nisbet on the hotel. On December 13, 1838, Nisbet, who had executed a bond to Matthews for the sale, had the Matthews estate assign the bond to Henry Dillon.⁹⁰

The only known facts about Matthews prior to his ownership of the hotel are that he came from Pulaski County and was living there in 1830, according to the census of that year,⁹¹ and that in 1832, he was still in Pulaski County, where he was a fortunate drawer in the 1832 Gold Lottery from that county.⁹² He also served in the state militia as a lieutenant colonel.⁹³ Advertisements run by Matthews indicate that under

his management, no major changes were made on the premises. Following is an item from The Georgia Messneger of April 27, 1837:

Indian Springs

The subscriber has purchased the buildings formerly occupied by Mr. Erwin and others, and is now putting them in the best order for the reception of company. The premises are very convenient to the springs, and by the attention the subscriber will bestow on his customers he hopes to merit and receive the patronage of all who have heretofore patronized the establishment. The virtues of the mineral water are too well known to need any recommendation. He expects to be able to accommodate from one hundred to one hundred and fifty persons. Every arrangement will be made for the amusement and recreation of the ladies.

His stables are put in good order and will be well attended.

Morris Matthews⁹⁴

February 5

Since Matthews died at the beginning of the 1838 season, we cannot be certain that the hotel stayed open during the remainder of that season. One clue is the following advertisement of July 23, 1838:

For the Indian Springs

Regular Horse Coach to Indian Springs via Forsyth leaving Macon Tues., and Sat. at 5 AM and the Springs Thurs. and Sun. 6 AM. Passengers will be called for and left at their residences.

C.L. Howland and Co.⁹⁵

In 1838, the Indian Springs Hotel was the only public house at the spring, and it is doubtful that the stages would have been running had there been no hotel open. Since the hotel was not sold until December of that year, it is possible that Edna Matthews ran the establishment for the remainder of the season.

A study of this hotel in the decade from 1830 to 1840 has not

revealed any outstanding historical or social events. It does appear to have been a reasonably successful watering place which would have compared favorably with any in the state and which was gaining a reputation as Georgia's finest. While the momentous events at Indian Springs in 1825 and the aftermath of that treaty would certainly be the most outstanding single historical event in the history of the hotel, the decades 1840 to 1860 have proved to be the hey-day of the hotel as a watering place. The early decades were somewhat unstable. It had four owners and four proprietors during the first 15 years, and two of those years it stood vacant. The story of the next two decades is one of success -- dances, political conventions, famous guests. New hotels were built, and Indian Springs continued to be the most famous watering place in Georgia.

NOTES

Chapter 2: The First Two Decades

¹The Georgian, Savannah, Ga., June 29, 1830, p. 1, c. 5.

²H.M. Edge and T.S. Saunders, Souvenir History of Indian Springs, (Indian Springs, Ga.: The Indian Springs Echo, 1874).

³The Georgian, August 30, 1823, p. 2, c. 2.

⁴Sherry L. Boatright, The McIntosh Inn and Its Place in Creek Indian History (Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section, 1976), pp. 46-47.

⁵Ibid, p. 47.

⁶The Georgia Messenger, Macon, Ga., August 12, 1824, p. 2, c. 1.

⁷Boatright, p. 51.

⁸The Southern Recorder, Milledgeville, Ga., May 24, 1825, p. 3, c. 3-4.

⁹Joseph Grisham, Travel Account of Joseph Grisham, May-June 1826, Connally-Brown Collection, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta. (Cited in Boatright.)

¹⁰Lucian Lamar Knight, Georgia's Landmarks, Memorials and Legends, Vol. I (Atlanta: The Byrd Printing Co., 1913), p. 344.

¹¹Lewis H. Shuck, The Barnwell Baptist Association of South Carolina, Its Churches and Their Deceased Ministers, 1867. Copy in possession of Mrs. Elizabeth Newsome, Sandersville, Ga.

¹²Jasper County, Court of the Ordinary, Marriages, 1821-1835, p. 20.

¹³Boatright, p. 51. (Cite House Reports, No. 98, pp. 443-44.)

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Boatright, p. 89.

¹⁸Ibid, p. 90. (Cites The Georgian, March 8, 1828.)

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Boatright, p. 90. (Cites Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Dispose of the McIntosh Reserve in the County of Butts, April, 1828, Surveyor General Department, Atlanta.)

²¹The Georgia Messenger, May 9, 1829, p. 1., c. 5.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., June 27, 1829, p. 1, c. 7.

²⁴U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1830, p. 166.

²⁵The Georgia Messenger, June 4, 1831, p. 4, c. 6; and August 13, 1831, p. 4, c. 5.

²⁶Georgia Surveyor General Department, Cherokee Gold, Sect. 1, Dists. 4 and 5, pp. 957 and 1094.

²⁷Butts County, Superior Court, Deed Book B and C, 1826-1835. A survey of these books revealed many tracts of land and slaves being sold by Bailey from 1829 until 1831.

²⁸Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Estate Records for 1830 to 1833. Upon examining the various types of estate records for this period, it was found that none existed for Joel Bailey.

²⁹Boatright, p. 91. (Cites Report of the Commissioners....etc.)

³⁰Ibid., pp. 91-92.

Mary B. Warren, ed., Marriages and Death in Georgia, 1820-1830, Heritage Papers, Danielsville, Ga., 1972; Obituary of Baldwin Fluker from The Journal and Messenger, Macon, Ga., February 7, 1829, p. 3, c. 6.

Bibb County, Court of the Ordinary, Will Book A, Will of Baldwin Fluker, p. 12.

³¹Washington Memorial Library, genealogical file on the Fluker family, Macon, Ga.

³²Boatright, p. 91

³³Ibid., p. 92. (Cites Index to the U.S. Census of 1820, Georgia, Washington County.)

³⁴Elizabeth P. Newsome, ed., Washington County, Georgia, 1825 Tax Digest, 1968, p. 75.

³⁵Boatright, p. 92. (Cites Bibb County, Court of Ordinary, Return Book A, 1823-37. Inventory and Appraisal of Goods and Chattels of the Estate of Baldwin Fluker, pp. 150-52.)

³⁶Bibb County, Court of the Ordinary, Will Book A, Will of Baldwin Fluker, p. 12.

³⁷Surveyor General Department, Atlanta, Grant Book K, Butts Reserves, p. 19.

³⁸The Georgia Messenger, May 24, 1828, p. 3, c. 6.

³⁹Ibid, June 4, 1830, p. 5, c. 4.; and June 11, 1835, p. 3, c. 3.

⁴⁰Ernest C. Hynde, Ante-Bellum Athens and Clarke County (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1974), p. 11.

⁴¹The Georgia Messenger, June 5, 1830, p. 5, c. 4.; June 9, 1832, p. 4, c. 1; June 20, 1833, p. 3, c. 4; June 19, 1834, p. 4, c. 3; and June 11, 1835, p. 3, c. 3.

⁴²Boatright, p. 95. (Cites Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book F, p. 209.)

⁴³Ibid; and Boatright, p. 95. (Cites Clarke County, Court of Probate, Annual Returns Book J, pp. 131-36.)

⁴⁴Butts County, Superior Court, Deed Book F, p. 209.

⁴⁵The Georgia Messenger, March 5, 1839.

U.S. Census, 1840, Georgia, Butts County, Henry Dillon, p. 14.

⁴⁶Georgia Department of Archives and History, Card File, Israel Keith, from Militia Records, 1808-1829, p. 28.

⁴⁷Alvaretta K. Register, comp., Index to the 1830 Census (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974).

⁴⁸The Federal Union, Milledgeville, Ga., May 27, 1828, p. 1, c. 2.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰The Georgia Messenger, May 24, 1828, p. 3, c. 6.

⁵¹Surveyor General Department, Grant Book K, p. 19.

⁵²The Georgia Messenger, June 5, 1830, p. 5, c. 4.

⁵³Oconee Hill Cemetery, Tombstone of John Nisbet, Athens, Ga. From inspection by John M. Sheftall, a descendant.

⁵⁴Robert Manson Myers, The Children of Pride (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 1636.

Augustus Longstreet Hull, Annals of Athens, Ga. 1801-1901 (Athens, Ga.: Banner Job Office, 1906), p. 470.

⁵⁵Myers, p. 1636.

Hull, p. 470.

⁵⁷Hynde, p. 27.

⁵⁸Ibid, p. 30.

⁵⁹Ibid, p. 11.

⁶⁰Hull, p. 101.

⁶¹The Southern Banner, Athens, Ga., September 13, 1834, p. 4. Boat-right states in her report that the Athens Factory burned. However, the above-noted item is an advertisement for irons saved from the late fire and belonging to the Athens Manufacturing Company. Also, the Nisbet estate records show that at Nisbet's death in 1841, he owned \$20,500 worth of stock in the Athens Factory.

⁶²Hull, p. 101.

⁶³Clarke County, Court of the Ordinary, Mixed Receipts and Annual Returns, Vol. H, Proceedings on the Estate of John Nisbet, January 17, 1842, pp. 547-58.

⁶⁴Surveyor General Department, p. 19.

⁶⁵Clarke County, Court of the Ordinary, Mixed Receipts...etc.

⁶⁶Ibid, Vol. J, pp. 130-36.

⁶⁷Oconee Hill Cemetery, Tombstone of John Nisbet.

⁶⁸Georgia Department of Archives and History, information in Central Research Room, card file on Leander A. Erwin. Cites Clarke County, Marriage License Book, 1815-1820, p. 36.

⁶⁹Georgia Genealogical Magazine, April, 1967, No. 24, pp. 1621-22. Abstract from Clarke County Court of the Ordinary, Administrator's Bonds, Book A.

⁷⁰Hynde, p. 11.

⁷¹Hull, p. 94.

⁷²The Georgia Messenger, June 5, 1830, p. 5, c. 4.

⁷³Ibid, June 20, 1833, p. 3, c. 4; and June 9, 1832, p. 4, c. 1.

Georgia Genealogical Magazine, January, 1968, No. 27, p. 1867. Abstracts of Deaths from the Files of Old Georgia Newspapers. From The Georgia Messenger, January 24, 1833.

⁷⁴The Georgia Messenger, June 9, 1832, p. 4, c. 1.

⁷⁵Ibid, July 4, 1833, p. 3, c. 4; and June 27, 1833, p. 4, c. 4.

⁷⁶The Georgia Messenger, June 19, 1834, p. 4, c. 3.

⁷⁷Georgia Genealogical Magazine, January, 1968, Vol. 27, p. 1867.
Abstracts of Deaths from Files of Old Georgia Newspapers. From The Georgia Messenger, January 24, 1833.

⁷⁸The Georgia Messenger, June 5, 1830, p. 5, c. 4.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰The Southern Banner, Athens, Ga., August 20, 1835, p. 3, c. 6.

⁸¹U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1830, p. 135.

⁸²Georgia Surveyor General Department, pp. 12-14.

⁸³The Georgia Messenger, June 9, 1832, p. 4, c. 1.

⁸⁴Ibid, June 11, 1835, p. 3, c. 3.

⁸⁵Ibid, June 16, 1836, p. 4, c. 5.

⁸⁶Robert P. Hooe, Some Georgia Reported Deaths 1842-1848 (Fredericksburg, Va.: privately printed by the compiler, 1977), abstract from The Southern Recorder, Milledgeville, Ga., December 17, 1845.

⁸⁷Ibid, April 27, 1837, p. 3, c. 5. (Was run from February 5.)

⁸⁸Ibid.

The Macon Telegraph, Macon, Ga., June 25, 1838, p. 3, c. 4.

⁸⁹The Macon Telegraph, July 9, 1838, p. 3, c. 5.

⁹⁰Boatright, p. 94. (Cites Butts County, Superior Court, Deed Book F, p. 209; and Clarke County, Court of the Ordinary, Annual Returns, Book J, pp. 131-36.

⁹¹U.S. Census, Georgia, Pulaski County, 1830, Morris Matthews, p. 140.

⁹²Georgia Surveyor General Department, Index to the Gold Lottery of 1832, Morris Matthews of Pulaski County drew Lot 893, District 14, Section 1.

⁹³Virginia Speer Harris, History of Pulaski and Bleckley Counties, Georgia, 1808-1956, Vol. I (Macon, Ga.: J.W. Butler Company, 1958), pp. 53-54.

⁹⁴The Georgia Messenger, April 27, 1937, p. 3, c. 5.

⁹⁵The Macon Telegraph, July 23, 1838, p. 3, c. 5.

Chapter 3

HENRY DILLON AND THE INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL: 1839-1849

On July 9, 1844, Thomas C. Nisbet, administrator of the estate of John Nisbet, issued to Henry Dillon a final deed to the "property known as the Tavern and Lot at the Indian Springs."¹ But long before this transaction occurred, Henry Dillon had become proprietor of the Indian Springs Hotel, having purchased it by a mortgage on December 13, 1838.² By March of 1839, he had moved his family to Indian Springs and had taken up residence at this establishment.³

Henry Dillon was born in 1799 in Georgia.⁴ Nothing is known of his youth, but by 1830, he was residing in Jasper County,⁵ and more particularly in Monticello.⁶ He was probably there much earlier than 1830, for on June 22, 1826, he married Nancy Cargele or Cargill of Jasper County.⁷ Nancy Cargele Dillon died at Indian Springs on April 1, 1840,⁸ having borne at least five children: John J. (1827); an unnamed daughter, who apparently died very early; Marinah or Mary A. (1833); Catherine (1835), and Missouri (1837).⁹ After Nancy's death, Dillon immediately married Sarah M.,¹⁰ for their first child was born in 1841.¹¹ Two children were born of this union, Nancy (1841) and Henry (1843),¹² the only two Dillon children born while the Dillons resided at the Indian Springs Hotel.

Dillon was not a newcomer to the hotel business. For the 13 years prior to moving to Indian Springs, he had been an innkeeper in Monticello, first at the Planter's Hotel in 1826, later at the Union Hotel on the square in Monticello in 1834, and finally at the Mansion House.¹³ He had also served as Clerk of the Superior Court in Jasper County, 1836-1838.¹⁴

While in Jasper County, Dillon was called Major Dillon, having attained that rank in the Fifth Division of the Georgia Militia in May of 1837. He was also the Division Quartermaster.¹⁵ In 1840, shortly after moving to Butts County, he was referred to as Colonel Dillon,¹⁶ and therefore may have been promoted soon after removing to Indian Springs, which was also included in the Fifth Division.¹⁷ His commanding officer was Major General John W. Burney of Jasper County,¹⁸ who later turned up as Dillon's executor and as a frequent guest at the Indian Springs Hotel.¹⁹

Dillon was also involved in the politics of the Democratic Party in the 1840s. At a Democratic convention held in Milledgeville in July of 1840, it was resolved that a dinner would be held at the Indian Springs Hotel the following September. Colonel Henry Dillon, a delegate to that convention, was appointed to a committee to carry out this resolution.²⁰ In June of 1843, he was one of two delegates from Butts County to attend a convention of the Democratic Party in Milledgeville, which had convened to nominate a candidate for governor.²¹ At a Democratic meeting held at the courthouse in Jackson, Butts County, in April of 1844, Colonel Dillon was one of five delegates appointed to draft a preamble and resolutions to govern this county organization.²² No doubt, Dillon's interest and acquaintances in the militia and the Democratic Party helped him lure people to his establishment at Indian Springs and contributed, therefore, to the dominance of Indian Springs and the Indian Springs Hotel over other Georgia watering places in the 1840s.

Henry Dillon sold the Indian Springs Hotel to the Varners of Jasper County on October 6, 1849.²³ Long before the 1850 "season" opened, Dillon had left Indian Springs. By the summer of 1846, John G. Park had

leased the hotel from Dillon and was the proprietor from 1846 until 1848.²⁴ During the summer of 1849, the hotel was leased by the Laniers, father and son, of Macon, Georgia, who ran the hotel themselves for that season.²⁵

Unlike many of his predecessors, the last chapter of Henry Dillon's life can be written. Before the summer of 1846, when Park took over the hotel,²⁶ Dillon moved his family to Jackson, the county seat.²⁷ He may have been in ill health even then, for on July 20, 1849, Dillon wrote his will, which left his property to his wife Sarah and his children.²⁸ But Sarah preceded him in death on December 4, 1849.²⁹ Dillon apparently operated a hotel in Jackson jointly with his son, John J., where they both resided. The Census of 1850 lists Henry and John J. as innkeepers. By comparing their location on the census with that of the Varner family, who then owned the Indian Springs Hotel, it is evident that the Dillons were not living in Indian Springs.³⁰

Henry Dillon died on July 16, 1850,³¹ and the sale of his property was held "at his residence in Jackson, Tuesday, 3rd September, 1850."³² His estate was appraised at \$8,498.75, including notes on Jefferson M., Andrew J., Clinton L., and Edward Varner for \$4,900.00, 105-1/2 acres in the Indian Spring Reserve, which brought \$1,365.00, property valued at \$809.25, and slaves.³³ The hotel in Jackson must have been owned by his son, John J., for it is not included in the sale of his estate.

Dillon left five minor children at his death: Nancy, age nine; Henry, age seven; Marinah, age 17; Catherine, age 15; and Missouri, age 12. All were living in Jackson with John J. and Henry in 1850.³⁵ Marinah married James B. Camp on August 7, 1850,³⁶ and moved to Indian Springs, where Camp was a merchant.³⁷ Henry Dillon (Junior) lived with the Camps³⁸

until joining the Confederate Army. He was killed at Gaine's Mill, Virginia, on June 27, 1862, aged 18 years and 10 months, a member of Company D, Sixth Georgia Regiment.³⁹ The whereabouts of the other children are not known. The descendants of Henry Dillon through Marinah and James B. Camp continued their association with the Indian Springs Hotel. His great-granddaughter, Miss Lucille Dillon Flemister, today remembers visiting the hotel with her mother, Mrs. Daisy Camp Flemister, and her grandmother, Marinah Dillon Camp, many times when it was operated by Joe and Amanda Varner.⁴⁰ Because both Henry Dillon and Edward Varner were long-time Jasper County residents before moving to Indian Springs, it is possible that the Dillon and Varner families were good friends as far back as the 1830s. Miss Flemister was not able to verify that supposition, but did attest to the close friendship that existed between the families in the post-Civil War period. Her reminiscences of the hotel in that period will appear in a later chapter.

As proprietor of the Indian Springs Hotel, Henry Dillon had assets that drew attention to his establishment. Having lived in nearby Jasper County for many years, he could count on his friends there to patronize him. His experience in the hotel business was also a boon to his new venture. He also must have had numerous acquaintances through his activities in the militia and in politics. The patronage of the Springs engendered by his political connections will be evident as the activities at the hotel are documented between 1840 and 1845.

By 1840, the Indian Springs Hotel included much more than the single structure that can be seen there today. The late 1820s had seen the building of a new kitchen. The 1830s saw the one-story, 24-room annex added on the north end, and in the 1840s, a ballroom was advertised.⁴¹

The location of the ballroom is not known. That it existed, there is no doubt, since the hours of operation of it are stated on the Rules and Regulations of the hotel in 1846.⁴² There was also a billiard house owned by Dillon, although its location is not known either.⁴³ The stables were located on Lot 12, just north of the guest annex.⁴⁴ In addition, there were cottages all around, which had been the case since the 1820s. There continued to be a number of service buildings, such as a smokehouse, privies, springhouse, slave quarters, kitchen, and the like. There was adequate space on the Dillon property for many buildings, for he owned Lot Two (two acres), Lot Three (two acres), Lot 13 (32 acres), half of Lot 12 (one acre), Lot 60 (25 acres), and Lot 61 (32 acres).⁴⁵ He also owned the rights to construct a railway and bathhouses on the reserve, which he sold in 1847 to his lessee, Colonel Park.⁴⁶ His advertisements indicate that he did have a bathhouse at the spring. At some point prior to 1835, the hotel had acquired a two-story portico,⁴⁷ typical of other resorts of the period, which wrapped around three sides of the building. There is no doubt that by the 1840s, the Indian Springs Hotel, with its resort-style architecture, ballroom, bar, billiard room and other amenities, had taken on the appearance of a "watering place" that was reminiscent of, if not as elegant as, many of the springs in Virginia or New York.

As one might imagine, it required a large amount of furniture and supplies to operate the hotel. Upon its sale by Dillon, an inventory of its contents was done, and it is interesting to note the types and number of some of the items. [A complete copy of the inventory appears in the appendix.] There were 86 mattresses and 74 bedsteads, far more than there were rooms in the building, so there must have been two or more beds to each room, as was the custom of the day in most inns. There were dozens of window curtains, dressing tables, feather pillows, wash stands,

tubs, tables, chairs, looking-glasses, sheets and bedspreads. The inventory, taken room by room, included 40 numbered rooms. The inventory also reveals that a Mr. Lipman had a store in the hotel.

Items from the public rooms included a fiddler's stand, 94 dining chairs, pictures and frames, carpets, an eight-day clock, 12 dining tables, flag chairs, solar lamps, silverware, and settees. From the kitchen and pantry, there were lamps, cannisters, dishes, kitchen benches, coffee urns, a muffin baker, and salt cellars. The total value of all items inventoried was \$1,062.41.⁴⁸ It is likely that many of them were in the hotel when Dillon purchased it, and it is certain that the Varners continued to use the furniture for many years. The inventory states that two notes of \$450 each had been received by Dillon's executor, J.M. Burney.⁴⁹ The appraisal of Dillon's estate includes two notes for \$450 from the Varner brothers,⁵⁰ possibly for these items.

The year 1840 brought the first of many political gatherings to be held at Indian Springs in the 1840s. On July 4, 1840, a convention of the Democratic-Republican Party was held at Milledgeville, and Colonel Henry Dillon was one of the delegates from Butts County.⁵¹ The convention resolved:

...that a public dinner be given to our Senators, Messrs. Lumpkin and Cuthbert, and our Representatives, Messrs. Cooper, Colquitt and Black, at the Indian Springs, in Butts County, on the first Wednesday in September, as a testimonial of our regard for the able and faithful discharge of their duties and their maintenance of principles in which the South feels so great an interest, and that a general invitation be extended to our fellow citizens throughout the State without distinction of parties....⁵²

A committee, which included Colonel Henry Dillon, Colonel David J. Bailey of Butts County, and Dillon's friend, General John W. Burney of

Jasper County, among others, was appointed to carry out this resolution.⁵³

It was certainly an extensive invitation list for the little town of Indian Springs to accommodate. There were only two hotels open at the time, the Indian Springs Hotel and another operated by A.F. Thompson.⁵⁴

Thompson's may have been a simple boarding house. His advertisement in 1840 gives no name for the house, and his advertisements do not appear again after 1840.⁵⁵ Certainly, these two houses could not begin to

accommodate the large crowd expected at the Springs. Accounts of the dinner estimated the crowd at close to 10,000,⁵⁶ with people as far as

the eye could see. Many brought their own provisions and tents. The public houses were filled to overflowing, and tents could be seen at every convenient spot. Reporters stated that there were even 40 or 50 ladies present.⁵⁷

Orations began "on the piazza of Mr. Dillon's hotel;"⁵⁸ among the orators were Alfred Cuthbert, Governor Wilson Lumpkin, Walter T. Colquitt, Mark A. Cooper, Colonel Seaborn Jones, Colonel Henry G. Lamar, General H.A. Haralson, Thomas Glascock, Colonel David J. Bailey, William Yancy of Alabama and many others. The speeches began at 10 o'clock on Monday morning, but many people had arrived days before. By Monday, the hills were covered, roads filled and houses crowded with men, horses, oxen, mules and carriages. To feed the crowd, 10,000 pounds of meat were cooked and 5,000 people were seated at one time.⁵⁹ There were probably more people at the Indian Springs for this event than had been there for the past 10 years. Political events, particularly large rallies such as this one, were important social events in the 19th Century. In those days of smaller government and few diversions from everyday life, party politics and the functions thereof flourished.

The increase in popularity of Indian Springs in the 1840s is indicated also by the frequency of the stage service. In the 1820s, the stage ran only once a week. During the 1830s, it was increased to twice a week. By 1842, however, one stage owner was offering service from Forsyth three times each week, leaving there on Monday, Wednesday and Friday upon the arrival of the cars from Macon, and leaving the Springs on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, arriving in time to meet the cars at Forsyth.⁶⁰ Another sign of the times was the opening of new hotels. In May of 1844, William A. Elder and William V. Burney opened the Elder House,⁶¹ and two years later, Bryan Collier, who, the previous year had been Dillon's partner, opened the McIntosh House in May of 1846.⁶²

The Elder House opened just in time to benefit from another large Democratic assemblage at the Springs. At a meeting in Baldwin County on July 2, 1844, the delegates agreed to meet with other county representatives at Indian Springs on July 25, 1844.⁶³ Billed as "The Young Men's Democratic Convention," the meeting actually began on Wednesday, July 24th.⁶⁴ The following description of the event is taken from an account in The Federal Union:

Every corner in which an individual could be placed was occupied. A great many tents were erected on the surrounding hills and the night passed off with anticipation the most agreeable... Early in the morning of Thursday, the crowd seemed to be gathering in, and by nine o'clock, three or four thousand persons were on the ground; by midday, the number had increased to five thousand.

...The people were addressed at the Indian Springs Hotel at 9 o'clock by the Hon. Howell Cobb, in a strain of fluent eloquence rarely equalled... He was followed by H.V. Johnson, Esq., who for about an hour and a half, held the vast multitude in deep silence and attentive scrutiny of a speech worthy of all praise ... requested each Vice President to assemble with the delegates of his county to form a procession and proceed to the stand which had been erected near the Mountain Spout Spring ... accompanied by several ladies....⁶⁵

During a two-hour recess, a barbecue was held and more speeches were delivered. The meeting was then adjourned, with the understanding that discussion would be continued at the Indian Springs Hotel at seven o'clock. At that time, more speeches were heard by a crowd that had hardly lessened. A letter, which was addressed to the Committee at Indian Springs, of which Henry Dillon was a member, from James K. Polk of Tennessee, the Democratic nominee to the Presidency, was read. Letters from George M. Troup, Valentine Walker and others who were prominent on the political scenes were also read.⁶⁶ On this day, the Indian Springs Hotel played host to some of Georgia's most noted politicians and statesmen.

In the midst of the political happenings at the hotel, however, its function as a watering place was not forgotten. Advertisements, such as the one from 1843 abstracted below, were run by Henry Dillon throughout his tenure:

Indian Springs Hotel

This watering place is now open for the reception of visitors, and extensive arrangements have been made for their reception. At no time, has this hotel opened for the season, under so satisfactory arrangements. An abundant supply of every necessary and luxury is in store or at command.

The undersigned is persuaded that no place in the up country of Georgia possesses superior attractions, to those in pursuit of health or recreation. The medicinal properties of the water are well-known and highly appreciated;-its wonderful effects on all Chronic eruptions, Dyspeptic, Bilious, Rheumatic and many other diseases, have been experienced by hundreds....

The increased facilities of access to the Springs, the attendance of accommodating assistants, and the pledges of the subscriber, to leave nothing undone to give satisfaction, will, he hopes, be a sufficient inducement, to a large portion of the public, to favor him with their presence.

The Bathing establishment is also remodelled and conveniently arranged to bathe with the Mineral Water....

June 16, 1843

Henry Dillon⁶⁷

Attached to this article were letters and newspaper items attesting to the efficacy of the waters of the Indian Springs. One letter, from Joshua Hill of Monticello to Major Dillon, dated May 31, 1843, reads in part:

...I have attended the Springs a part of every summer since my marriage, and have had an excellent opportunity of testing in the person of Mrs. H., the efficiency of the waters, as a remedy for dyspepsia. It has never failed to afford speedy relief, by restoring an appetite, the indulgence of which in an indiscriminate diet, has occasioned not the slightest inconvenience. It has effectively cured heart burn and acidity of the stomach. I could cite many individual cures of persons suffering from general debility and prostration by fever and ague. I was greatly improved myself from the use of the water, while recovering from a long attack of bilious intermittent fever. I know that bathing in this water will cure many cutaneous diseases, among them that most distressing of the eruptions (to bodies) the thrush....⁶⁸

A gentleman from North Carolina, after a visit to the Indian Springs Hotel, wrote of his experience to the Wilmington, North Carolina, Chronicle. His letter was included in Dillon's 1843 advertisement. Of the hotel, he said:

...There is near the Spring, an excellent hotel kept by Henry Dillon, Esq., who is prepared to accommodate a large number of persons. Mr. D. is a very gentlemanly man, polite, and courteous to his guests, modest in his charge and his house is in every way worthy the patronage of the public....⁶⁹

Dillon's 1845 advertisement indicated that a Mr. Collier was then in business with him, but the partnership was short-lived, as Collier opened the McIntosh House the next year.⁷⁰ The 1845 item also revealed

that stage line service was then daily between Forsyth and the Springs, a further indication of the popularity of the Indian Springs.⁷¹

One of the new competitors of the Indian Springs Hotel was sure to provide stiff competition. The proprietor of the McIntosh House boasted that the building was 250 feet deep and 42 feet wide, with 70-80 rooms, three drawing rooms, a ballroom and piazzas that extended all around the house. It was on the brow of McIntosh Hill overlooking the Spring.⁷² But, based on the increasing popularity of this watering place, particularly during political events, there was plenty of business for all three proprietors at the Springs.

Why Henry Dillon decided to lease the Indian Springs Hotel in 1846 and remove to Jackson cannot now be determined. It is possible that he had been spending the winter months in Jackson prior to this time, running a year-round hotel. Or perhaps, he foresaw that Jackson, as the county seat, had more potential for growth and that he could profit financially by operating a year-round hotel there while leasing the Indian Springs Hotel. It appears that he was having financial difficulties by 1843. John Waters took a first mortgage on the hotel in January of that year, and Charles Cargile took a second mortgage on January 31, 1843. These mortgages included three two-acre lots and the billiard house lot, eight slaves, and furniture. But these mortgages were paid off by 1844 and Dillon received full title to his property.⁷³ Whatever the reason, it is clear that by June of 1846, the hotel had another proprietor. Miss Joe Varner stated in her reminiscences that Colonel John G. Park kept the hotel in 1846 and was the lessee.⁷⁴ This is verified by the "Indian Springs Hotel Regulations"⁷⁵ found in the Varner Collection and signed "Jno. G. Park, Proprietor, Butts County, Ga., June 1, 1846."⁷⁶

John G. Park came to Indian Springs from Baldwin County, probably Milledgeville.⁷⁷ He had served as Comptroller General of Georgia from 1842 until 1846,⁷⁸ and was active in Democratic politics in Baldwin. In July of 1844, he attended a meeting in Baldwin, where he offered the resolution to send delegates to a convention to be held at Indian Springs later that month. He was also named to a committee to select candidates for Congress.⁷⁹ A delegate to the Indian Springs convention,⁸⁰ he probably became acquainted with Henry Dillon there and may have stayed at the Indian Springs Hotel.

Park remained as proprietor of the hotel for three seasons, leaving it by the season of 1849,⁸¹ although he resided at the Springs until his death.⁸² He is listed in both the 1850 and 1860 censuses as a resident of Indian Springs. In 1860, he was practicing law there, being 58 years of age that year, and his wife Rebecca, aged 46, lived with him. His property was valued at \$8,000.⁸³ Park died at the Springs, but was buried in Milledgeville.⁸⁴ Rebecca Park was living at the Springs as late as 1869 and was known as something of a "matchmaker" by patrons of the area.⁸⁵

The rules and regulations of the hotel in 1846 offer much insight into life at the Indian Springs Hotel and document the addition of a ballroom in the 1840s.

Indian Springs Hotel Regulations

- I. Visitors on their arrival will be required to register and give the number of their servants and horses.
- II. Persons leaving their rooms will lock their doors and deposit the keys at the office.
- III. Neglect of duty and improper conduct of service is requested to be reported at the office.
- IV. Breakfast will be served at 8, Dinner at 2, Evening Tea at 7 o'clock; notice will be given by the large bell.

- Ten minutes previously, a small bell will be rung and Ladies first to take their seats.
- V. Meals will be sent to chambers in cases of sickness only, by servants of the Hotel. In all other instances an extra charge will be made.
 - VI. Visitor's servants admitted to the Dining Room are expected to perform any services required of them.
 - VII. The Ball Room will be opened at 8 and closed punctually at 11 o'clock, P.M. At the latter hour, the house will be closed.
 - VIII. No gentlemen will be allowed to participate in dancing without a ticket to be procured at the Office. Ball Room opened to all.
 - IX. All gambling and disorderly conduct positively prohibited.
 - X. Persons intoxicated will not be admitted into the Ladies Parlor, the Ball or Sitting Room or Dining Room.
 - XI. Tickets for Baths can be secured at the Bathing House.
 - XII. A female servant will be always in attendance in the Saloon adjoining the Ladies Bathing Rooms, subject to their command.
 - XIII. Care will be taken of all baggage kept at the office, but no responsibility will be incurred for cloaks, umbrellas, etc.

Charges

Board per month (payable weekly).....	\$30.00
Board per week, (payable weekly).....	10.00
Board per day.....	1.50
Single meal.....	.50
Children under 12 years and servants half price.	
Horses per month.....	15.00
Horses per week.....	5.00
Horses per day.....	.75

Jno. G. Park, Proprietor, 86
Butts County, Ga., June 1, 1846

The proprietors of the hotel for the 1849 season were the progenitors of Georgia's most famous poet, Sidney Lanier. Sterling Lanier and Robert Sampson Lanier, grandfather and father of the poet respectively, leased the Indian Springs Hotel for the season from Henry Dillon.⁸⁷ Sterling Lanier, who emigrated to Georgia from North Carolina, was experienced as a hotel proprietor.⁸⁸ In the winter of 1849, Sterling and Robert S. Lanier were operating the Floyd House in Macon, but by May 30

had removed to the Indian Springs Hotel.⁸⁹ Sidney Lanier, born in 1842, probably spent the summer of 1848 there, although only seven years old at the time.

The Laniers spent only one summer at the Springs. In June of 1850, they opened the Lanier House in Macon, an elegant establishment only recently demolished.⁹⁰ Their new Macon hotel cost \$25,000 to build and had 70 chambers or guest rooms, three public parlors, two dining halls, a bar, baths, dumb waiters and carpet in the chambers. The cost of the furnishings was estimated at \$10,000.⁹¹ Their advertisements were signed by "S. Lanier and Son."⁹²

In 1850, Sterling and Robert S. Lanier were living at the Lanier House.⁹³ Around 1852, Sterling moved to Montgomery and later to New York for the remainder of his life.⁹⁴ But he did not give up the hotel business. Although he left the Lanier House, he purchased the Montvale Springs in Tennessee and spent several summers there, where, in 1860, Sidney Lanier visited him. The place may have provided the inspiration for his novel, Tiger-Lillies.⁹⁵ Robert S. Lanier was a lawyer as well as innkeeper, and practiced first in Griffin and then in Macon.⁹⁶

The editors of The Georgia Journal and Messenger, in May of 1849, wrote the following of Indian Springs and the Laniers:

The Indian Springs

The traveling public are invited to examine the various advertisements, touching this favorite watering place, to be found in our columns today. Mr. Collier will continue, as heretofore, at his well known and popular stand, the McIntosh House; and the Messrs. Lanier, who have won an enviable reputation as enterprising and obliging hosts, have taken the Dillon House for the season... We have no doubt that the inducements offered at the Indian Springs the present season, will attract hundreds of visitors there, who, under other circumstances, might spend their summer in Cherokee or at the North. 97

The advertisement of the Laniers for 1849 is as follows:

Indian Springs Hotel
The Messrs. Lanier
Now of the 'Floyd House', Macon, Ga.

Have taken the above Hotel for the season, and will be thankful for the patronage of their numerous friends. The terms will be moderate and the accommodations comfortable.

It is useless to say anything in regard to this well-known place of summer resort. The Medicinal virtues of the water is well known, and the climate is as good as that of any part of Middle Georgia.

The above Hotel, together with the McIntosh House, kept by Mr. Collier, will afford accommodations for a very large concourse of visitors.

Two Daily Lines of Four Horse Post Coaches will run daily from Forsyth to the Springs, and Families can at all times be supplied with private conveyances, if preferred.

The Bathing Houses are in fine condition. 98
May 30 3m [run for 3 months]

It is interesting to note that both items from The Georgia Journal and Messenger mention the McIntosh House as if it and the Indian Springs Hotel were the only hotels at the resort. No advertisements were found in the Macon or Milledgeville papers from 1845 to 1850 for any others. Though William A. Elder had advertised his hotel to open in 1844, he is not listed as an innkeeper in Butts County in the Census of 1850, yet his advertisement for a just-completed hotel appeared in July of 1851.⁹⁹ Perhaps the Elder House burned and was rebuilt in 1850, or perhaps the proprietors met with misfortune, either illness or financial hardship, and were unable to operate the establishment for a few years. One can only surmise. But from 1846 until around 1890, the Indian Springs Hotel, the McIntosh House and the Elder Hotel were the most-visited houses at the Indian Springs.

At the end of the 1849 season, the Laniers left the Indian Springs Hotel and returned to Macon to open their elegant new establishment. Their departure brought an end to the first half of the 19th Century, during which the Indian Springs Hotel had been built, improved, and brought to the forefront in the growing list of watering places in Georgia. It also brought about real stability with regard to the ownership. For the next 103 years, the Indian Springs Hotel was the property of the Varner family.

NOTES

Chapter 3: Henry Dillon and the Indian Springs Hotel: 1839-1849

¹Butts County, Superior Court, Deed Book F, p. 209.

²Ibid.

³The Georgia Journal and Messenger, Macon, Ga., March 5, 1839.

⁴U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Residence 31.

⁵Ibid., 1830, Jasper County, p. 371.

⁶The Federal Union, Milledgeville, Ga., June 11, 1834, p. 1, c. 3.

⁷M.H. Carter, ed., Georgia Pioneers, 8(1) (Albany, Ga.: 1971), p. 44.

⁸Dillon-Camp Bible, owned by Miss Lucille Dillon Flemister, Griffin, Ga.

⁹Ibid.

U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Residence 31.

¹⁰Dillon-Camp Bible.

¹¹U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Residence 31.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Boatright, p. 95. Information from Mrs. Frank Castille of Forsyth, whose husband is a Dillon descendant.

The Federal Union, June 11, 1834, p. 1, c. 3.

The Georgia Journal and Messenger, March 5, 1839.

¹⁴Boatright, p. 95.

¹⁵The Federal Union, May 16, 1837, p. 4, c. 6.

¹⁶Ibid., July 7, 1840, p. 2, c. 4.

¹⁷Ibid., May 16, 1837, p. 4, c. 6.

¹⁸Ibid.; and July 7, 1840, p. 2, c. 4.

¹⁹Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Will Book B, 1845-1851, pp. 415-17.

Hotel Register for Indian Springs Hotel, 1852-1873, Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.

²⁰The Federal Union, July 7, 1840, p. 2, c. 4.

²¹Ibid, June 6, 1843, p. 2, c. 4.

²²Ibid, May 7, 1844, p. 3, c. 2.

²³Butts County, Superior Court, Deed Book G, p. 442.

²⁴Indian Springs Hotel Regulations, June 1, 1846, Varner Collection.

Letter of Miss Joe Varner to the editor of the Jackson Argus, date unknown, Varner Collection.

²⁵The Georgia Journal and Messenger, May 30, 1849, p. 3, c. 5.

²⁶Indian Springs Hotel Regulations, Varner Collection.

²⁷U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Residence 31.

Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Wills and Returns 1845-1851, Appraisal of the Estate of Henry Dillon, p. 430.

²⁸Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Wills and Returns, 1845-1851, p. 430.

²⁹Dillon-Camp Bible.

³⁰U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Residence 31.

³¹Dillon-Camp Bible.

Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Wills and Returns, 1845-1851, Book B, Will of Henry Dillon, p. 415.

³²Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Wills and Returns, 1845-1851, Book B, Appraisal of the Estate of Henry Dillon, p. 430.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Henry Dillon and John J. Dillon, Residence 31.

³⁶Dillon-Camp Bible.

³⁷U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1860, Indian Springs, James B. Camp.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Dillon-Camp Bible.

⁴⁰Interview with Miss Lucille Dillon Flemister on November 30, 1977, by the author.

⁴¹Indian Springs Hotel Regulations, Varner Collection. ("The Ball-Room will be opened at 8 and closed punctually at 11 o'clock P.M....")

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book F, p. 126.

⁴⁴Ibid., Deed Book E, p. 266.

⁴⁵Ibid., Deed Book F, pp. 260, 406; Deed Book E, p. 266.

⁴⁶Ibid., Deed Book G, p. 107.

⁴⁷The Southern Banner, Athens, Ga., August 20, 1835, p. 3, c. 6.

⁴⁸Inventory of the Furnishings of Henry Dillon in the Indian Springs Hotel, 1850, Varner Collection.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Wills and Returns, 1845-1851, Book B, Appraisal...etc., p. 430.

⁵¹The Federal Union, July 7, 1840, p. 2, c. 4.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴The Georgia Messenger, June 18, 1840, p. 3, c. 6.

⁵⁵A search of the Macon and Milledgeville newspapers from 1840 to 1850 did not turn up any further advertisements for A.F. Thompson.

⁵⁶The Federal Union, September 8, 1840, p. 2, c. 3.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰The Georgia Messenger, June 16, 1842, p. 3, c. 6.

⁶¹The Federal Union, May 21, 1844, p. 3, c. 6.

⁶²The Georgia Telegraph, Macon, Ga., May 5, 1846.

The Federal Union, May 27, 1845, p. 3, c. 4.

⁶³The Federal Union, July 9, 1844, p. 3, c. 4.

⁶⁴Ibid, July 30, 1844, p. 2, c. 6-7.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid, June 13, 1843, p. 3, c. 4.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid, May 27, 1845, p. 3, c. 4.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²The Macon Telegraph, May 5, 1846.

⁷³Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book F, pp. 109, 126.

⁷⁴Miss Joe Varner to the editor of the Jackson Argus, Varner Collection.

⁷⁵Indian Springs Hotel Regulations, Varner Collection.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷The Federal Union, July 9, 1844, p. 3, c. 4.

⁷⁸Lucian Lamar Knight, comp., Georgia's Official Register (Atlanta: State of Georgia, Department of Archives and History, 1923), p. 163.

⁷⁹The Federal Union, July 9, 1844, p. 3, c. 4.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹The Journal and Messenger, May 30, 1849, p. 3, c. 5.

⁸²Miss Joe Varner to the editor of the Jackson Argus, Varner Collection.

⁸³U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, John G. Park, p. 366.

U.S. Census, 1860, Indian Springs, John G. Park.

⁸⁴Miss Joe Varner to the editor of the Jackson Argus, Varner Collection.

⁸⁵Letter of Sallie C. Butler to Miss Joe Varner, June 6, 1869, Varner Collection.

⁸⁶Indian Springs Hotel Regulations, Varner Collection.

⁸⁷The Journal and Messenger, May 30, 1849, p. 3, c. 5; and p. 2, c.

Telephone interview with John M. Sheftall, a descendant, concerning his research on the Lanier family, by the author on January 20, 1978.

⁸⁸Aubrey Harrison Starke, Sidney Lanier: A Biographical and Critical Study (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1933), pp. 8-10.

⁸⁹The Journal and Messenger, May 29, 1849, p. 3, c. 5.

⁹⁰Ibid, June 12, 1850, p. 2, c. 2.

⁹¹Ibid, May 29, 1850, p. 2, c. 3.

⁹²Ibid, June 12, 1850, p. 2, c. 2.

⁹³U.S. Census, Georgia, Bibb County, 1850, Sterling and Robert S. Lanier, The Lanier House, p. 134.

⁹⁴Telephone interview with John M. Sheftall, January 20, 1978.

⁹⁵Starke, pp. 34-35.

⁹⁶Ibid, pp. 8-10.

⁹⁷The Journal and Messenger, May 30, 1849, p. 2, c. 5.

⁹⁸Ibid, p. 3, c. 5.

⁹⁹U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, William A. Elder, p. 35.

The Journal and Messenger, July 9, 1851, p. 1, c. 4.

Chapter 4

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE VARNER FAMILY

Edward and Cynthia Varner arrived at the Indian Springs Hotel with a part of their large family on February 2, 1850.¹ Though none of the Varners singularly achieved fame or fortune, their long association with Indian Springs has given them a significant place in the history of our state. When the Varner family disposed of the property 103 years after they acquired it, they left behind a vast and valuable record of their family's history and that of the Indian Springs Hotel. [Note: Since the content of this paper is primarily directed towards the interpretation of the history of the Indian Springs Hotel, this history of the Varner family will be brief and is based for the most part on the Varner Collection and on the memories of Varner relatives and friends still living.]

Edward Varner was born in Wilkes County, Georgia, on November 4, 1789,² the son of Frederick Varner and one of five children.³ He later moved to Putnam County, where on October 30, 1810, he married Emma Dent of that county, and the couple then resided in Eatonton, the county seat. Four children were born to them: Early (b. March 25, 1816), Ann Eliza (b. October 5, 1817, d. October 1, 1818), Samuel Dent (b. February 21, 1820, d. 1868), and Frederick Augustus (b. March 1, 1822, died as an adult).⁴ Emma Dent Varner died on March 20, 1822.⁵

The Varner Collection papers state that Emma Dent was thought to be the daughter of Colonel Frank Dent and that she was buried at his home near Eatonton. However, a Samuel Dent also lived in Eatonton around 1810 and operated a tavern there. He later moved to Jones County, where he

died in 1818. His will states that he had "a daughter, Emma Varner, wife of Edward Varner." Since he died before Emma, she is probably buried in the old Union Cemetery in Eatonton. The cemetery dates to that period, but many of the graves are unmarked.⁶

Edward Varner's second wife was Cynthia H. Fitzpatrick Byrom, the daughter of Rene and Mollie Hardwick Fitzpatrick. Rene Fitzpatrick had moved to Greene County, Georgia, in 1785-86, having been born in Fluvanna County, Virginia, in 1760. Mollie Hardwick Fitzpatrick was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, in 1763, but moved to Greene County with her parents in the late 1780s. Cynthia Fitzpatrick was one of four children of Rene and Mollie and was born in Greene County, Georgia, on February 15, 1798.⁷ On March 9, 1815, Cynthia Married John Byrom of Jasper County. Two children were born of this union: William Hardwick (b. July 21, 1817, d. August, 1873) and Seymour Scott (b. January 15, 1819, d. October 15, 1827). John Byrom died on November 17, 1819, and was buried on the grounds at their home in Jasper County, at Hillsboro, about eight miles from Monticello.⁸

Cynthia Fitzpatrick Byrom and Edward Varner were married in Jasper County on July 6, 1823,⁹ and Edward Varner removed to Jasper County to reside at the plantation of her late husband.¹⁰ There, five of their seven children were born, two others being born in Dublin, Georgia. Their seven children were: Andrew Jackson (b. April 10, 1824, d. April 11, 1862), Jefferson Monroe (b. October 1, 1825, d. July 1, 1862), Clinton Lafayette (b. November 21, 1827, d. July 19, 1881), Mary Josephine (b. Dublin, July 20, 1830; d. October 9, 1831), John Clark (b. Dublin, September 12, 1832; d. May 1, 1884), Cynthia Amanda (b. May 23, 1835, d. March 29, 1915), and Narcissa Josephine (b. June 17, 1837, d. November

10, 1928).¹¹

Edward Varner, during his 12-year marriage to Emma Dent, operated a store in Eatonton where he sold hardware, fancy dress goods and staple items.¹² After his marriage to Cynthia Byrom, he moved to the Byrom plantation and became a planter. The plantation, which was owned by his wife and sons, contained 506-1/4 acres, and the Varners farmed it until the 1860s, although they mortgaged all but one acre, which was the Byrom-Varner cemetery, in 1852.¹³ In 1850, Edward, then 61 years of age, left his home of 27 years and moved his family to Butts County,¹⁴ where he operated the Indian Springs Hotel for 17 years. He continued to operate the Byron plantation until 1861.¹⁵ On June 26, 1867, his youngest daughter, "Miss Joe," had her father admitted to the State Lunatic Asylum in Milledgeville,¹⁶ where he died on February 19, 1869, at the age of 80. Many years later, his daughters placed a marble headstone at the grave in Milledgeville and had shrubbery and a fence added to the site.¹⁷ Cynthia Varner survived her husband by 13 years, dying on December 15, 1882, at the age of 84, at the Indian Springs Hotel. She was buried in the Indian Springs Cemetery in the Varner lot.¹⁸

The Varners came to the Indian Springs Hotel with no known experience in that type of business. However, they may have had associations with the area for many years which caused them to desire to purchase the hotel. Joel Bailey, the first proprietor of the hotel, had come from Jasper County around 1823 and, therefore, may have been acquainted with Cynthia and John Byrom. Additionally, Miss Joe Varner stated that her mother had visited Indian Springs around 1820 and was a good friend of Chief William McIntosh. It has also been established that Henry Dillon,

proprietor from 1839 until 1845, who sold the hotel to the Varners, had lived in Jasper County for at least 13 years before moving to Indian Springs. He and Edward Varner were both active in the Democratic Party there. It is possible that the Varners' friendship with these early proprietors and Cynthia Varner's early association with the Springs led to their patronage of the hotel in the years before 1850. So, the Varners may have been somewhat familiar with their new home, if not with the operation of the hotel.

This history of the Varner family must include what is known of the lives of the 13 children of Edward and Cynthia Varner, that number including the children by their first marriages. Information on the generations descending from these 13 Varners can be found, in part, in the Varner Collection. However, since these descendants are so numerous, information on many of them is scanty, and few of them had any significant role in the history of the Indian Springs Hotel. Therefore, no attempt has been made to include them in this family history.

Only one of the two sons of John and Cynthia Byrom lived to maturity. The youngest, Seymour Scott, died at the age of eight and is buried in the Byrom-Varner cemetery in Jasper County. The eldest son, William Hardwick Byrom, and his wife, Susan Gunn Byrom, moved first to Houston County and then to Dooly County, Georgia.¹⁹ In 1852, William purchased 800 acres in Dooly and founded the town of Byromville, of which he was the first postmaster. He built his home there in 1859. The couple had at least four children: John S., William H., Seymour, and Della.²⁰

William began a family business in Byromville which included a bank, cotton gin, and general store, as well as the 800-acre plantation. His son, John S., expanded the business under the name of J.S. Byrom and Sons

and even published a newspaper called The Byromville Banking and Commercial News.²¹

The family of William H. Byrom frequently visited the Indian Springs Hotel in the 1850s and 1860s.²² From 1863 until 1868, Miss Joe Varner, half-sister of William, resided with the Byroms and taught school in Dooly County.²³ William died at the age of 56 in August of 1873. Miss Joe Varner remained in contact with her Byrom relatives and she, along with S.B. Byrom of the Byrom Corporation, became interested in the family history. In 1911, S.B. Byrom purchased tombstones for the graves in the Byrom-Varner cemetery.²⁵

Of the four children of the Varner-Dent marriage, little is known of two of them. The eldest, Early, was still living in 1861 when his half-sister, Amanda, mentioned in a letter written from Cuthbert, Randolph County, Georgia, that "'Bud' Early says nearly everybody will be at the Springs this summer."²⁶ The census for 1850 places him in Jasper County²⁷ but he may have lived in Randolph County some time afterwards. His brother, Sam Dent Varner, writing to Governor Joseph E. Brown in 1859, stated that he had a brother who was sheriff of Randolph County. Since the whereabouts of all of the Varner sons in that year are known except for Early and Frederick, it is possible that Early was in Randolph County that year.²⁸ Early Varner was married to Lucy Lumpkin Callaway, and they had five children.²⁹ All that is known of Frederick Augustus Varner is that he lived to maturity and never married. Ann Eliza Varner, the second child, died at the age of one.

Of Samuel Dent Varner, much more is known. Already 30 years old when his father purchased the hotel, Sam was by that time settled on his own in Jasper County. In 1843, he was elected clerk of the Court of Ordinary for

Jasper County.³⁰ He served in the Mexican War,³¹ returning to Jasper County in 1849, where he was a candidate for clerk of the Superior Court in 1850.³² He was first married to Caroline Elizabeth Pearson on August 13, 1846, and had one child, Caroline or "Callie" by that marriage. Callie lived at the Indian Springs Hotel until she married Samuel H. Dean of Griffin.

Sam Varner's second wife was Frances Henry Malone or "Fannie," whom he married on November 16, 1852, in Richmond County, Georgia. They had one daughter, Ginnie Henry, who married Jesse Newsom. Their descendants reside in Washington County today. Fannie Malone is said to have met Sam Varner at the Indian Springs Hotel, where, upon hearing his voice in an adjoining room, she became desirous of making his acquaintance.³³ It is believed that Sam moved to his wife's home in Richmond County following their marriage and lived there after her death.

In 1859, Sam wrote to Governor Brown, stating that he would be going to Richmond County to vote. In this letter, he asked the governor to appoint him as secretary, presumably to the governor, and cited his many political activities, as well as those of his father and brothers. Fannie Malone Varner probably died around 1860, whereupon Sam married the "widow La Taste," of whom nothing is known. Finally, on December 20, 1863, he married Maria J. Dunbar of Richmond County. Family records indicate that during the 1860s, he lived in New York, Baltimore, and Charleston, returning to Savannah, where he died and was buried in February of 1868.³⁴

The eldest son of Edward and Cynthia Varner was Andrew Jackson Varner, called "Bud Jack." Born in 1824, he was 26 when he moved to Indian Springs with his family. In 1860, he was working as a hotel clerk and residing at the Indian Springs Hotel.³⁵ He never married. On April 11,

1862, just as he was planning to enter the Confederate Army, he died at Indian Springs, where he is buried. His death came suddenly at the age of 38, and the letters of his mother and the diary of his sister, Miss Joe, tell of the sadness of this close-knit family that his death occasioned.³⁷ To compound the sadness, the next-born, Jefferson Monroe Varner, was killed on July 1, 1862, in the Battle of Malvern Hill, Virginia.³⁸ His body was not returned to Georgia, although his mother had made inquiries regarding the possibility of this but was apparently unable to afford the expense.³⁹

"Bud Jeff" Varner had attended East Tennessee University in Knoxville, Tennessee, until around 1850. [A letter written to his father from school in 1848 appears in the appendix.] In a letter of 1847 to his brother Andrew, he mentioned that he was in a fraternity and on the debate team, and that he expected to be there another year. He was not residing at the hotel in 1850, so he may have still been in school.⁴⁰ He later studied law and became an attorney, and in 1860, he was residing at the Indian Springs Hotel and was an attorney at law.⁴¹ By the following year, he had joined the Confederate Army. Miss Joe Varner, writing to him in June of 1862, stated that they had just received a letter from him, the first in a year.⁴² Jeff never received the letter, however, for just six days after she wrote to him, he was dead.⁴³

Clinton Lafayette Varner, born in 1827, also attended East Tennessee University. He and Jeff were there together at first,⁴⁴ but Clinton had left by 1848. In writing to his brother in that year from Washington, D.C., Clinton stated that he had met President James K. Polk and that General H.B. Haralson had introduced him to his daughter. Clinton was hoping to get an appointment but did not specify the position for which he was

applying. This trip also took him to Baltimore.⁴⁵ By 1850, he was in Indian Springs and working at the hotel as a clerk.⁴⁶ On March 15, 1855, at the age of 27, he married Anny Gray,⁴⁷ and by 1858, he was residing at her home in Houston County.⁴⁸ He served in the Confederate Army, afterwards returning to Houston County to his family.

Clinton and Ann Varner had five children, but two of them died in infancy, Frank Gunn and Malvern Hill. His son, Andrew Jackson, moved to Texas and never married. Julia Fitzpatrick married Charles M. Chapman of Wyoming and had five children. Forrest Gray Varner married Annie Killebrew and had six children, three of whom are still living. Paul Hampton Varner married Lena Etheridge, and Robert Lee Varner died in Canada in 1906.

In May of 1876, Clinton L. Varner divorced his wife of 21 years, and his whereabouts for the next several years are not certain, but he may have been living in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where he died on July 19, 1881.⁵⁰ One of Clinton's sons, Forrest Gray Varner, retained close ties with the Indian Springs Hotel. He and his children lived there in the early 20th Century, and his son Paul purchased the hotel from "Aunt Joe" in 1927. Paul then remodeled it and used it as a summer home for many years.⁵¹ Forrest and Paul were very interested in the history of the Varner family and of the hotel, and it is due in part to their interest that so many Varner family papers have survived.

The next child of Edward and Cynthia Varner, Mary Josephine, born in 1830, lived only one year. She is buried in the Byrom-Varner cemetery in Jasper County.⁵²

The fifth child of Edward and Cynthia Varner, was John Clark, born in 1832. It is through descendants of John that the other portion of the

Varner Collection has come. John Clark Varner moved with the family to Indian Springs in 1850 and worked as a clerk at the hotel.⁵³ In 1852, he traveled extensively, including a visit to New Orleans.⁵⁴ But he came back to the hotel and resumed his job and was living there in 1860, then 28 years of age.⁵⁵ On May 24, 1861, he entered the service of the Confederate Army as a first sergeant in Company D, Butts Volunteers, Sixth Georgia Regiment. He was promoted to lieutenant on December 25, 1861. On June 27, 1862, the same year that his brother Andrew died and his brother Jefferson was killed, he lost his arm in the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia. In March of 1863, he was assigned to duty as assistant enrolling officer for the Seventh Congressional District of Georgia, and in December of that year, he was honorably discharged. He was awarded, posthumously, the Cross of Honor, the award being given to his widow on January 19, 1909, by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. In letters written to John during the war by his family, he was referred to as "General," but there is no evidence in his record to verify that he had attained that rank.⁵⁷

On June 25, 1866, John Varner married Adelaide Gordon, called "Addie," the daughter of Colonel William Lancaster Gordon.⁵⁸ Five children were born to them. Gordon was born December 15, 1866, and lived as an adult in Pratt City, Alabama. Mary Nealy was born September 16, 1868, and died March 12, 1871, being buried at Indian Springs. Valeria Lamar was born October 10, 1873. She married C.S. White and moved to Griffin, Georgia. Kenan, born December 31, 1875, removed to Wiega, Louisiana. Cynthia Bird was born July 16, 1877, and married B.C. Sanders. She resided throughout her adult life in Newnan, Georgia.⁵⁹ She, like Paul and Forrest Varner, took great interest in her family history, and it was "Miss Birdie" who

saved many items relating to the Varners and the hotel, which now comprise the Varner Collection.

John Clark and Adelaide Varner lived their entire lives together in Indian Springs. In 1877, he was elected Receiver of Tax Returns for Butts County but was not reelected in 1879.⁶⁰ Employed for several years as a teacher,⁶¹ John Clark was active in the county organization to elect A.H. Colquitt as governor in 1876 and received a letter from Colquitt thanking him for his support.⁶²

Several letters have survived from W.L. Gordon to his daughter Adelaide. Gordon apparently had little confidence in his son-in-law, for on January 29, 1879, he wrote: "... I learn that John C. did not get the office of receiver this year. Well it is probably best for him for a public life is not best for one subject to such temptations as he was. Have you any idea of his buying you a house or has he enough left to do so?..."⁶³ Sometime around 1883, John Varner left for a trip west, going first to Texas and then to Arkansas. The sons of Edward Varner's cousin, William, had gone to Arkansas several years earlier and founded the town of Varner, Arkansas, and several of the Varners' friends had moved to Texas. Whether John went there to live or merely to visit is unknown. It is known that he was gone throughout the winter of 1883-84. He died in Varner, Arkansas, on May 1, 1884, and was buried there.⁶⁴

The two youngest of the Varner children were Cynthia Amanda, born in 1835 and called Amanda, and Narcissa Josephine, born in 1837 and called "Joe" as a youth and "Miss Joe" or "Aunt Joe" in her later years. With the exception of a few years in the 1860s, they lived together throughout their lives. Amanda died on March 15, 1915, at the age of 80, and Miss Joe died on November 10, 1928, at the age of 91. Of all the Varner

children, they had the longest and closest association with the Indian Springs Hotel.

Amanda was 15 years old and Joe was 13 when they moved to Indian Springs. Both were well-educated for their day. Before moving to the Springs, they attended the Eatonton Female Academy,⁶⁵ and in 1854, they attended LaGrange College.⁶⁶ Except for this interlude and a few years in the 1860s, Amanda and Joe lived the rest of their lives in Indian Springs at the hotel.⁶⁷ After Edward Varner was committed to the State Asylum in 1867, Joe and Amanda Varner operated the Hotel, then known as the Varner House.

Although Joe and Amanda were very close, they were opposites in their physical and personal characteristics. Amanda was a shy, slightly built woman⁶⁸ whose main interests were music, flowers, vegetable gardening and animals.⁶⁹ Joe, on the other hand, was a tall, large-framed person who was very independent and outspoken and whose interests were literary in nature.⁷⁰ Neither Joe nor Amanda ever married. Evidently, during the war, Joe was engaged to a man referred to in a letter only as "Dick."⁷¹ Possibly he was killed in the war, for his name never again appears in the Varner papers. Much later, when Miss Joe was about 53, an attorney by the name of C.B. Martin proposed to her, and his letters indicate that he was a widower and was extremely disappointed when she rejected him.⁷² The Varner Collection contains no hint of romance in Amanda Varner's life.

Very little is known about Amanda. Her personality was such that she was not inclined to talk of her life, and if she wrote or received many letters, it is not obvious, for few letters regarding her have survived. When she died in 1915, her obituary in the Jackson Progress-Argus recounted



Miss Joe Varner [Photograph from the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.]



Miss Amanda Varner [Photograph from the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.]

the Varners' tenure at Indian Springs and called Amanda a "daughter of the Old South."⁷³ According to those who remember her, Amanda was gentle, quiet and very much dominated by her younger sister, Joe.⁷⁴ Amanda was interested in beauty and nature. She studied music in Cuthbert, Georgia, in the 1860s,⁷⁵ probably at Andrew College, a Methodist women's college founded in 1854, and her interest in music continued throughout her life. Several issues of The Musical Advocate and Family Journal belonging to her are among the items in the Varner Collection.⁷⁶ In the 1860s, Amanda joined the Mount Vernon Ladies' Society, the group responsible for restoring the home of George Washington.⁷⁷ The few surviving letters of Amanda were written when she was away from home and always expressed concern for her flowers, particularly her rose garden.⁷⁸ Her brother, John Clark, writing to Miss Joe in 1883, said of Amanda: "... Isn't that sister of ours a great woman? Her cows, her chickens, her gardens with its fresh corn and doubtless lots of other things both 'toothsome' and 'looksome' - She is a jewel of a woman, I assure you."⁷⁹

Amanda was a very religious person and a faithful member of the Flovilla Methodist Church, to which she left, in her will, dated March 24, 1915, a town lot in Indian Springs.⁸⁰ By this instrument, she left all the remainder of her property, including half interest in the hotel, to her sister Joe, excepting the town lot for the church and her "milch" cow "Susannah Westley," which she left to her friend, Mrs. A.H. Ogletree.⁸¹

Much more is known about Miss Joe Varner than of the others in the Varner family, as it was she who preserved the records of the hotel as well as letters and other papers relating to her personal life. Joe lived until 1928, and there are friends and descendants living today who well remember "Aunt Joe", as she was known. Because of her unusually long

life and her close association with Indian Springs, she was the subject of numerous newspaper articles which were based on her reminiscences of her life and the history of the hotel.

Joe's education began at the Eatonton Female Academy in the 1840s, and her report card from the school indicates that she did best in rhetoric, composition, Latin and arithmetic. Chemistry and music were not her best areas of study.⁸² This seems to fit what is known of her personality -- an avid reader and writer, a businesswoman and an outspoken critic on almost any topic. She also attended LaGrange College for at least one year, 1854, and may have been there longer.⁸³ Following college, Joe returned to Indian Springs and remained there until 1863. It appears that she did not have a salaried position in those years, and from her diary and letters during that period, it seems that she passed the time helping at the hotel and socializing with the guests. When war broke out, she stated that there was then the additional duty of caring for wounded soldiers.⁸⁴ Then, in 1861, Joe was engaged. Amanda, writing in April of that year from Cuthbert, told Joe that she did not want to go to her wedding, although she liked "Dick" and that Joe would never do better.⁸⁵ This is the only hint of romantic attachment in Joe's early life, and none of her descendants recall her ever discussing this episode in her life.

Joe's first teaching experience came in May of 1863, lasting until May of 1868. During these years, she ran a school in Dooly County at Byromville, where she lived with her half-brother, William H. Byrom. Her diary is most complete for these years. She always returned to Indian Springs for holidays and summer vacations, but she also had time to travel and visited her many friends and relatives in Savannah, Burke County,

Macon, and Forsyth. She particularly enjoyed trips to Macon, where she attended the theatre, toured the city, and visited friends, most of whom had been guests over the years at the hotel. She did leave Byromville briefly in the fall of 1864 to teach in Columbus, but was back in Dooly County by 1865. Joe returned to Indian Springs in 1868 and remained there for the remainder of her life.⁸⁶

In her youth, Joe had loved dances and society, but after her 30th birthday, she seemed to take a more serious approach to life, adopting extremely religious and moralistic attitudes. She supported the United Friends of Temperance⁸⁷ and was a regular attendant at Methodist camp meetings.⁸⁸ Most of her time was spent visiting with friends, reading and writing letters.⁸⁹ She once kept a list of books she had read in one year and the list contained well over 100 selections.⁹⁰ She also subscribed to numerous periodicals, including Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, The Famous Fiction Series, and The Cosmopolitan.⁹¹

After Edward Varner's death, Miss Joe was indisputedly the head of the Varner clan. She kept up with all the nieces and nephews and provided advice and counsel to all of them. Taking care of her own finances as well as those of the hotel, she also attended to any legal matters that came up regarding their property. Many of her account books of income and expenditures still exist.⁹²

Even before her father's death in 1869, Miss Joe had assumed a protective position toward her nieces and nephews, particularly Callie Varner, the daughter of Sam D. Varner, who had been left in her charge. In 1861, a young man by the name of W.J. Green wrote several letters to Miss Joe expressing his love for Callie in an effort to win Miss Joe's approval as a suitor for Callie. From the content of his letters, however, Miss

Joe obviously firmly refused because she felt Callie, at 15 years of age, was too young.⁹³

According to legend, Miss Joe did not reserve her advice for her family alone. A close friend, writing of her after her death, stated:

It was here that the politicians met and formed their campaign plans, and where men of ambition for political honors journeyed for approval of their aspirations by Miss Joe, whose wonderful sagacity and advice had been so helpful to men holding the highest positions of both state and national preferment, was well worth the seeking.⁹⁴

The Atlanta Journal, in an article entitled "Miss Joe, Mayor and Town Council of Indian Springs," stated that Joe ran Indian Springs and that the city council met on her porch to decide many questions.⁹⁵

The Varner daughters were particularly close to their parents, possibly because they were the youngest children and only surviving daughters and they continued to live at home as adults. According to family tradition, on the day Joe was born, her father bought a set of white-and-gold china. When his wife admonished him for being extravagant, he gave it to his new baby daughter, who treasured it for the rest of her life. Her father understood her interest in literature, and often took her to Macon to the theatre.⁹⁶ When her parents died, Joe revealed her intense sadness in her diary and each year noted the anniversaries of their deaths.⁹⁷

Miss Joe was said to have had more than 30 scrapbooks, though only a few have survived. They contain few family mementoes or photographs, but instead are collections of interesting newspaper articles, poems and religious items.⁹⁸ Many of the scrapbooks were given as gifts to friends and relatives.⁹⁹

John C. Varner once described his sister as having "... a noble physique a hundred and eighty pounds of the best womanly flesh in the



Miss Joe Varner [Photograph from the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.]

world...."¹⁰⁰ Many people remember her as outspoken, critical and ill-tempered, but with a kind heart.¹⁰¹ In her later years, she wore old-fashioned clothes, usually in dark colors. When she became elderly, she carried her "burying clothes" with her when she traveled, and they were, of course, black. When she was ill, she usually summoned one of her nieces or nephews to come to Indian Springs and wait on her, and they never failed to answer the summons, for she was not one who could be easily refused. Her temper and domineering attitude worsened as she grew older, and she often struck fear in the hearts of her many great-nieces and great-nephews who visited her as children.¹⁰²

There were many branches of the Varner family scattered throughout Georgia. Many did not know each other, but Miss Joe knew each of her relatives. Every summer at a designated time, one branch of the family would go to the Springs for two weeks. If they happened to be there during camp meeting, they were required to go with Aunt Joe, even the smallest children.¹⁰³

Miss Joe Varner never had truly declining years. She was active and alert in her 91st year, and letters written by her in early 1928, the year of her death, indicate that her mind was clear.¹⁰⁴ Apparently, she could no longer see well enough to write, however, for by 1925, most of her letters were then written by her niece, Birdie Sanders.¹⁰⁵ Only during her last months was she bed-ridden.¹⁰⁶ Her 91st birthday was noted in many Georgia newspapers. On November 10, 1928, just five months after her 91st birthday, Miss Joe Varner died¹⁰⁷ and was buried in the Varner lot of the Indian Springs Cemetery.¹⁰⁸ Several items pertaining to the life of Miss Joe Varner appear in the Appendix, and other data will come to light with regard to the history of the Indian Springs Hotel under her ownership.

NOTES

Chapter 4 -- A Short History of the Varner Family

¹ Letter of Birdie V. Sanders to Emma Jennings Porter, Newnan, Ga., December 5, 1928, Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.

Birdie V. Sanders, "Lived Under Thirty Presidents," original draft of an article published in The Atlanta Journal, June 19, 1927. Draft in possession of Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section, Atlanta. Mrs. Sanders quotes her Aunt Joe as saying that the Varners moved to Indians Springs on February 2, 1850.

U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Edward Varner, Residence 488.

² Letter of Miss Joe Varner to Mrs. Emma J. Porter, October 16, 1925, Varner Collection.

³ Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection. Information was copied from the Bible just before it was found to be missing from Miss Joe's room at the Indian Springs Hotel.

Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, entry for February 15, 1880, Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.

⁴ Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

Letters of Birdie V. Sander to Mrs. Emma J. Porter, December 5, 1928, Varner Collection.

Ledger books for Edward Varner's store in Eatonton, 1816-20, Varner Collection.

⁵ Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

⁶ Birdie V. Sanders, compiler. Notes on the Varner family, Varner Collection.

Telephone interview with Mrs. Leila Brittain on February 23, 1978, by the author. Mrs. Brittain is researching the history of Eatonton and has searched the county records. She cites Jones County Court of Ordinary, Will Book B, pp. 67-69.

⁷ Paul J. Varner, compiler. Genealogy of the Varner family, Varner Collection.

⁸ Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

⁹ Jasper County, Court of Ordinary, Marriage Records, 1812-1820, p. 60.

¹⁰ Letter of Birdie V. Sanders to Mrs. Emma J. Porter, December 5, 1928, Varner Collection.

Birdie V. Sanders, "Lived Under Thirty Presidents," Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

¹¹ Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

Birdie V. Sanders, compiler, Notes on the Varner family, Varner Collection.

¹² Ledger books of Edward Varner's store in Eatonton, 1816-20, Varner Collection.

¹³ Jasper County, Superior Court, Deed Book J, p. 241.

¹⁴ U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Edward Varner, Residence 488.

Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

¹⁵ Letter of Joe Varner to Jefferson Varner, June 25, 1862, Varner Collection.

Butts County, Superior Court, Deed Book G, p. 407.

¹⁶ Birdie V. Sanders, statement signed by Mrs. Sanders, Varner Collection.

¹⁷ Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

Letter of Thomas F. Green, superintendent of the State Lunatic Asylum, to Miss Joe Varner, February 27, 1869, Varner Collection.

¹⁸ General J.T. Burney, "Mrs. Cynthia Varner," an obituary dated December 18, 1882, from an unnamed newspaper, Varner Collection.

Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Indian Springs Cemetery, Varner lot, inscription on tombstone, personal inspection by the author, August of 1977.

¹⁹ Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

Mrs. Edgar Lancaster, compiler, Jasper County's Cemetery Book (privately published, 1969), p. 133.

Birdie V. Sanders, compiler. Notes on the Varner family, Varner Collection.

Paul J. Varner, compiler. Genealogy of the Varner family, Varner Collection.

20 Dooly County Sesquicentennial Corporation, History of Dooly County, 1971, p. 17.

Letter of Della Byrom Dupree to Miss Joe Varner, Byromville, August 20, 1873, Varner Collection.

21 The Byromville Banking and Commercial News, Vol. III, No. 3, September, 1907 (Byromville, Ga.: J.S. Byrom & Sons), Varner Collection.

22 Indian Springs Hotel Register, 1852-1870, Varner Collection.

23 Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

24 Letter of Della Byrom Dupree to Miss Joe Varner, Byromville, August 20, 1873, Varner Collection.

25 Letter of S.B. Byrom to Miss Joe Varner, Byromville, August 21, 1911, Varner Collection.

26 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, Cuthbert, Ga., April 8, 1861, Varner Collection.

27 U.S. Census, Georgia, Jasper County, 1850, Early Varner.

28 Birdie V. Sanders, compiler. Notes on the Varner family, Varner Collection.

29 Abstracts from the Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

30 The Federal Union, Milledgeville, July 9, 1844, p. 4, c. 3.

Commission of Sam D. Varner as clerk of the Court of Ordinary, January 10, 1843, scrapbook of Miss Joe Varner, Varner Collection.

31 Abstract from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

32 The Federal Union, May 15, 1849, p. 3, c. 6.

33 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Newsome, descendants of Sam D. Varner, Sandersville, Ga., October 20, 1977, by the author.

Letter of Ginnie Varner to Misses Joe Varner and Callie Varner, November, 1868, Varner Collection.

Letters of W.J. Green to Miss Joe Varner, October 16, 1861; November 7, 1861; January 12, 1862, Varner Collection.

34 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Newsome, October 20, 1977, by the author.

Letter of Sam D. Varner to Governor Joseph Brown, October 1, 1859, File 2, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Indian Springs Hotel Register, 1852-1870, Varner Collection.

35 U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, Edward Varner, Residence 488.

U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1860, Indian Springs, Edward Varner, Residence 1.

36 Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

37 Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, entries for July 26, 1862, and April 1, 1863, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Letter of Cynthia Varner to John C. Varner, undated, Varner Collection. Context indicates that it was written between A.J. Varner's death in April of 1862 and Jefferson M. Varner's death in July of that year.

38 Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, entries for April and July, 1862, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

39 Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

Letter of J.A. Nelson to Cynthia Varner, August 12, 1863, Varner Collection. Mr. Nelson is responding to Mrs. Varner's letter requesting information on recovering her son's body from the battlefield.

40 Letter of Jefferson M. Varner to Andrew J. Varner, East Tennessee University, Knoxville, June 1, 1847, Varner Collection.

U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Edward Varner, Residence 488.

41 U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1860, Indian Springs, Edward Varner, Residence 1.

42 Letter of Joe Varner to Jefferson M. Varner, June 25, 1862, Varner Collection.

43 Abstracts from Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

44 Letter of Jefferson M. Varner to Edward Varner, East Tennessee University, Knoxville, June 22, 1847, Varner Collection.

45 Letter of John Clark Varner to his brother, Washington, D.C., March 23, 1848, Varner Collection.

46 U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1860, Indian Springs, Edward Varner, Residence 1.

47 Butts County, Court of Ordinary, Marriages "White", 1826-1882, 152.

48 Paul J. Varner, compiler. Genealogy of the Varner family, Varner Collection.

Butts County, Superior Court, Deed Book 6, p. 450, deed to A.J. and J.M. Varner of Butts County and C.L. Varner of Houston County.

49 Birdie V. Sanders, compiler. Notes on the Varner family, Varner Collection.

50 Birdie V. Sanders, compiler. Family line of Birdie V. Sanders, Varner Collection.

Paul J. Varner, compiler. Genealogy of the Varner family, Varner Collection.

51 The Jackson Progress-Argus, June 22, 1928, "Miss Joe Varner Observes Her Ninety-First Birthday," p. 1, c. 2.

52 Abstracts from the Varner family Bible, Varner Collection.

53 U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1850, Edward Varner, Residence 488.

54 Letter of Cynthia Varner to Amanda and Joe Varner, April 3, 1852, typescript in Varner Collection (original at LaGrange College).

55 U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, 1860, Indian Springs, Edward Varner Collection.

56 Confederate service record of John Clark Varner, Varner Collection.

57 Letter of Joe Varner to Jefferson Varner, June 25, 1862, Varner Collection.

58 Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Marriages "White", 1826-1882, p. 377.

Letters of William Lancaster Gordon to Adelaide Gordon Varner, 1872-1880, Varner Collection.

59 Birdie V. Sanders, compiler. Family line of Birdie V. Sanders, Varner Collection.

60 Commission of John C. Varner as tax receiver of Butts County, July 18, 1877, scrapbook of Adelaide G. Varner, Varner Collection.

Letter of William L. Gordon to Adelaide G. Varner, January 29, 1879, Varner Collection.

61 Ibid.

License for teaching of John C. Varner, May 26, 1882, scrapbook of Adelaide G. Varner, Varner Collection.

62 Letter of A.H. Colquitt to John C. Varner, July 18, 1876, Varner Collection.

63 Letter of William L. Gordon to Adelaide G. Varner, January 29, 1876, Varner Collection.

64 Letter of John C. Varner to Joe Varner, September 28, 1883, Varner Collection.

Interview with Ms. Therese Newton, Madison, Ga., October 19, 1977, by the author. Ms. Newton is a descendant of the Varner who founded Varner, Ark.

Letter of Miss Joe Varner to Birdie V. Sanders, 1909, Varner Collection.

65 Report card of Joe Varner, Eatonton Female Academy, undated, Varner Collection.

Birdie V. Sanders, "Lived Under Thirty Presidents," original draft of an article published in The Atlanta Journal, June 19, 1927. Draft in possession of Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section, Atlanta.

66 Letter of Cynthia Varner to Joe and Amanda Varner, April 3, 1852, typescript in the Varner Collection.

67 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection.

Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Ibid., entry for November 7, 1864.

68 Photograph of Amanda and Joe Varner, undated, Varner Collection.

Interview with Ms. Lucille Dillon Flemister, Griffin, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Ms. Therese Newton, Madison, Ga., October 19, 1977, by the author.

69 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection.

Issues of The Musical Advocate and Family Journal, owned by Amanda Varner, Varner Collection.

Letter of John C. Varner to Joe Varner, September 28, 1883, Waverly, Tex., Varner Collection.

70 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Newsome, Sandersville, Ga., October 20, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles White, Thomaston, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Letter of John C. Varner to Joe Varner, September 28, 1883, Waverly, Tex., Varner Collection.

71 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection.

72 Letters of C.B. Martin to Joe Varner, September 23, 1890, and June 16, 1891, Varner Collection.

73 The Jackson Progress-Argus, April 1, 1915, obituary of Amanda Varner.

74 Interview with Ms. Lucille Dillon Flemister, Griffin, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Ms. Therese Newton, Madison, Ga., October 19, 1977, by the author.

75 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection.

76 Issues of The Musical Advocate and Family Journal, 1891 and 1898, owned by Amanda Varner, Varner Collection.

77 Subscription card for The Mount Vernon Ladies Society for Amanda and Callie Varner, date unknown, Varner Collection.

78 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection.

79 Letter of John C. Varner to Joe Varner, September 28, 1883, Waverly, Tex., Varner Collection.

80 Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Will Book B, p. 136.

The Jackson Progress-Argus, April 1, 1915, obituary of Amanda Varner.

- 81 Butts County, Court of the Ordinary, Will Book B, p. 136.
- 82 Report card for Miss Joe Varner, Eatonton Female Academy, undated, Varner Collection.
- 83 Letter of Cynthia Varner to Amanda and Joe Varner, April 3, 1852, typescript in the Varner Collection.
- 84 Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
- 85 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection.
- 86 Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
- 87 Ritual of the Council of Temperance, The First Degree of the United Friends of Temperance, Nashville, Tenn., July 30, 1873, Varner Collection.
- 88 List of books read by Miss Joe Varner during one year in Byromville, Ga., Varner Collection.
- 89 Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
- 90 List of books read by Miss Joe Varner during one year in Byromville, Ga., Varner Collection.
- 91 Periodicals belonging to Miss Joe Varner, Varner Collection.
- 92 Miscellaneous correspondence and records of the Varner family, Varner Collection.
- 93 Letters from W.J. Green to Joe Varner, October 16, 1861; November 7, 1861; January 12, 1862, Varner Collection.
- 94 The Macon Telegraph, November 16, 1928, "Just Twixt Us," by Bridges Smith.
- 95 The Atlanta Journal, June 14, 1914, "'Miss Joe', Mayor and Town Council of Indian Springs."
- 96 Birdie V. Sanders, "Lived Under Thirty Presidents"....
- 97 Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
- 98 Scrapbooks of Miss Joe Varner, Varner Collection.
- 99 Interview with Ms. Lucille Dillon Flemister, Griffin, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles White, Thomaston, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

¹⁰⁰ Letter of John C. Varner to Joe Varner, September 28, 1883, Waverly, Tex., Varner Collection.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Ms. Lucille Dillon Flemister, Griffin, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles White, Thomaston, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Ms. Therese Newton, Madison, Ga., October 19, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Newsome, Sandersville, Ga., October 20, 1977, by the author.

¹⁰² Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles White, Thomaston, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

¹⁰³ Interview with Ms. Lucille Dillon Flemister, Griffin, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles White, Thomaston, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

Interview with Ms. Therese Newton, Madison, Ga., October 19, 1977, by the author.

¹⁰⁴ Letter of Joe Varner to Forrest Varner, 1928, Varner Collection.

¹⁰⁵ Letter of Miss Joe Varner to Mrs. Emma J. Porter, October 15, 1925, typed by Birdie V. Sanders, Varner Collection.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles White, Thomaston, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

¹⁰⁷ Paul J. Varner, compiler. Genealogy of the Varner family, Varner Collection.

¹⁰⁸ Indian Springs Cemetery, Varner lot, inscription on the tombstone of Miss Joe Varner, personal inspection by the author, August of 1977.

Chapter 5

THE INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL: 1850-1860

When Joel Bailey operated the Indian Springs Hotel nearly 30 years earlier, the area around the spring was a virtual wilderness. The years since had brought dramatic changes. No longer did the hotel stand alone. Not only were there three hotels by the early 1850s, but a village called Indian Springs had grown up there. By 1860, there were in the village five merchants, two grocers, two carriage makers, a manteau maker, a blacksmith, a gunsmith, two physicians, two teachers, three attorneys, a millwright, numerous carpenters and farm laborers, 82 dwellings and 89 families.¹ One of the merchants, a German by the name of Samuel Lipman, operated a store in the Indian Springs Hotel.² The Post Office was also located in the hotel, with Edward Varner as postmaster.³

The Indian Springs Hotel complex, by the 1850s, encompassed much more than Lots 2 and 13, which had been granted to John Nisbet in 1834. In 1842, Henry Dillon had purchased Lot Three, known as the "Mill Lot," on Sandy Run Creek, just across the road from the hotel. In 1849, he sold that lot to the Varners.⁴ In 1853, the Varners purchased Lot 17, known as the "Ballroom Lot."⁵ They also acquired four other lots, including 12, 33, 34 and 47 in the town of Indian Springs, totaïing 12 acres.⁶ A Southern Mutual Insurance Company policy for 1850 described the premises as being:

... the wood two-story and one story buildings now in the occupation of Henry Dillon but to be immediately occupied by said Edward Varner known as the Indian

Springs Hotel - including as well the hotel proper and the buildings thereto attached as also the buildings on the opposite side of the street west - situate at the Indian Springs....⁷

Another policy for 1854, insuring it for \$5,000, covered:

One principal Hotel building occupied by the families of the Insuree three thousand and five hundred dollars (3500). On Ball Room One Thousand Dollars (1000) On sleeping rooms next to hotel and highway five hundred dollars (500)....⁸

The building on Lot 17 was the ballroom and that lot joined the hotel lot on the south end.⁹ Around 1925, Miss Joe Varner described the structure as follows:

The old ballroom stood on the vacant lot on the south end of the house and was one story with a basement. The upper story was used for the dance hall and the bottom was used as a barroom where the best of whiskeys, brandies and ales were served.⁹

The lot was purchased from R.L. Mott in 1853.¹⁰ By 1854, dances were being held there. In August of that year, the Journal and Messenger stated that the Varners "have recently completed and furnished a large and elegant Dancing Saloon...."¹¹ The guest annex was on the north end of Lot 2. In 1851, Edward Varner advertised that he had added new guest rooms. The discrepancy between Erwin's description of his guest annex, being 24 rooms in a one-story building, 200 feet long, and Miss Joe Varner's description of the Varner guest annex, being four wings, two-stories each, with 32 rooms,¹² leads one to believe that the Varners replaced the Erwin annex with a new structure. It is possible, however, that Miss Joe was mistaken in her reminiscences and that Edward Varner simply added to the Erwin structure.



This photograph is from Knight's Georgia's Landmarks, Memorials and Legends, Vol. II, published in 1914. This two-story porch is thought to date to the 1860s to replace an earlier two-story porch that had a second-story landing and extended around three sides of the hotel. The porch pictured here was replaced after 1900 by the present shed porch.

Lot Three had been the site of a gristmill for many years. The old mill had burned by 1850 and was not replaced until around 1875. What stood on the lot in the 1850s is not known.¹³ Edward Varner operated a stage line and boarded horses for his guests, which required a sizable stable. The stable was located on Lot 12, just north of the guest annex, and was probably the same building that had been Henry Dillon's stable in 1843.¹⁴ Lot 13 may have been the site of cottages or tent spaces. The other lots owned by the Varners were not adjacent to the hotel lot, and the function they served is unknown.¹⁵

Like his predecessors, Edward Varner advertised the hotel throughout the season in the Macon and Milledgeville newspapers. On May 21, 1851, the following appeared in the Journal and Messenger of Macon:

Indian Spring

The undersigned begs leave to state to the public generally, that he is yet the proprietor of the INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL at this place, and is now ready to receive company. The virtues of the Indian Spring Waters, have been so long known and so generally tested, that I presume it is not necessary here to say anything in their praise. The proprietor of this Hotel has only to add that in addition to these first requisites of the Indian Spring as a summer residence, that he has, since the last season, largely added to the Indian Spring Hotel, by extending his dining room, so as to make it equal to anything of the kind south-wardly, and he has also added many fine rooms for families, as well as for persons without families. He also assures those who may be pleased to call at this old established Hotel, that the best of everything the country affords, shall be provided for their accommodations, and returns his former pledge that no hotel shall surpass the Indian Spring and no pains spared to make all comfortable. With this assurance he invites the calls of the public generally.

Edw. Varner¹⁶

According to Miss Joe, the dining room he mentions in this advertisement

was in the rear, shed section of the house, as it had been under previous proprietors. It is presently divided into small rooms, but in the 1850s, according to Miss Joe, it was one long room that was five feet wider and longer than it was at the time Miss Joe described it, ca. 1928.¹⁷

The Varners' competitors that year were not to be outdone. Bryan Collier of the McIntosh House boasted that he had added a wing to his establishment containing a parlor, saloon, dining room and 30 bed chambers.¹⁸ William Elder also advertised in 1851 a "large and commodious Hotel, north of the Creek and very near the Spring ... the rooms are large and well ventillated [sic]...."¹⁹

By 1856, Edward Varner could claim six years of experience as an asset to his hotel. His advertisement that year read:

Indian Spring Hotel

The undersigned has again the pleasure of informing his numerous friends, as well as the public at large, that he is still at the Indian Spring Hotel and fully prepared by the assistance of his sons and his own experience of six years in the Hotel, with the best of Cooks the country can furnish and assistants of all kinds, to ask of all those that are pleased to visit the Spring, a generous share of their patronage, intending himself to spare no pains to make every person comfortable that will please call on him. The Indian Spring Hotel is now open ready to receive all calls that may be made. There will be at Forsyth good Coaches and Hacks to convey all persons to the Spring.

Edward Varner, Proprietor²⁰

May 20, 1856

The above advertisement, which appeared in the Federal Union of Milledgeville, brought this response from the editors:

Indian Spring Hotel

By reference to Mr. Varner's advertisement in this paper, it will be seen that this old and popular

House is now open to receive visitors to the Indian Springs. Col. Varner will give those who visit his house a hearty welcome and accommodations of the best character.²¹

Once the structure itself had been enlarged and that fact advertised, Edward Varner then concentrated his advertising on the amenities offered there such as the fare, amusements and convenient transportation. The following item from the Georgia Telegraph of Macon in 1858 illustrates this change:

Indian Springs Hotel

The subscriber begs to say to his old friends and patrons, and to the public generally, that his house is now open for the reception of visitors. My sons will as usual give me their assistance. My rooms shall be neatly furnished. My servants faithful and attentive, and the best the country and markets afford will be had, and no person shall leave my house without saying he is satisfied if it is to be realized from something good to eat. My Bar Room will be supplied with the best Wines, Brandies, Cigars, etc. My large dancing saloon will be attended with fine Music. Good coaches will be kept at the Depot in Forsyth, to convey persons to my door.

Last though not least, right here is the best little
 Spring in the world.

The terms of board this year will be
 Gentleman or Lady \$2.00 per day, \$10 per week
 \$30.00 per month
 Children and Servants half price
 Horses 75 cents per day, \$5 per week.

Edward Varner²²

The bill of fare at the Indian Springs Hotel could be described as plain, country style but nourishing and tasty, according to today's standards. In 1855, the entrees included boiled chicken, ham, mutton or corned beef, along with roast beef, pig, turkey, goose and duck. The menu for the following year was the same, except that egg and caper sauce were added to the boiled entrees. The menu also announced that breakfast

BILL OF FARE.

VARNER'S HOTEL,

Indian Spring,.....1859.

E. VARNER, Proprietor.

Soup.

BOILED CORN BEEF AND CABBAGE
BOILED HAM,
BOILED LAMB,
BOILED CHICKEN.

Vegetables.

IRISH POTATOES,
TOMATOES,
BEETS,
CABBAGE,
OKRA,
ONIONS,
CUCUMBERS.

ROAST BEEF,
ROAST LAMB,
ROAST PIG,
ROAST CHICKEN.

Pastry and Fruits.

Wines, Brandies, Ale, &c., Extra.

Each Waiter furnished with a Card and Pencil.

Telegraph Steam Printing House.

would be served at seven in the morning, dinner at one o'clock and supper at seven o'clock. Boarders who invited friends to dinner were required to make their plans known at the hotel office. In 1859, the menu offered as entrees boiled corned beef and cabbage, ham, lamb and chicken, as well as roast beef. Vegetables were listed on this menu and included Irish potatoes, tomatoes, beets, cabbage, okra, onions and cucumbers. Each year, wines, brandies and ales were offered for an extra charge.²³ Joel Barnett, a frequent visitor to Indian Springs in the 1860s, described the fare in a letter to his wife. Although he did not specify the hotel at which he was staying, the food he listed is similar to that on the Indian Springs Hotel menu. He stated: "Our table is very good - Irish potatoes, corn, tomatoes, cabbages, ocre [sic], peas, mutton, chicken, ham, eggs, butter, milk, coffee, tea, apple pie and cakes."²⁴ It appears that the proprietors offered a healthy diet for those who were ill, and thereby provided a necessary supplement to the curative powers of the mineral spring.

Edward Varner operated his own stage line from Forsyth to the hotel, as is noted in his advertisements. In 1928, Miss Joe Varner shared her memories of the stage-coach days in a letter to her nephew:

Since you have been trying to resurrect titles to the site of the Old Stage Coach stop I have been delving into the storehouse of my memories and I recall many instances that afford me pleasure... The stage ran from here to Forsyth and back every day and in those days its return was the event of the day, for when it had unburdened itself many were the prominent guests among the arrivals. My trips on the stage far outnumber the years of your life. I have often danced until the early morning hours and then changed my dress, sprang in and ordered William Clark Jolly and Thomas Dickinson our drivers who alternated for many years, to get the four fine horses underway. It took an hour and a half to reach the stopping place, about halfway between here and Forsyth, where the traces were unfastened immediately and the horses trotted out and on to a stable while fresh ones were

ready to step right in their places. We tarried a few minutes and often saw our good friends, the Webbs, who had a big plantation on the left hand side of the road going to Forsyth, the stage stand was on the right... It took almost another hour and a half to reach Forsyth, here the train was met, shopping or short visits made and at a set time the stage began its return trip which was the same as the other in regard to the change at the stage stand, and a house for the caretaker there.

During the rush season, in the summer, many times two trips were made daily. The stage returning about midnight, there were exciting and hilarious times, the dances in the ballroom would break up and every one rushed down when it was shouted that the stage was coming. Torches illuminated the place and there was a hustle in every direction, sleepy servants coming to with a start, baggage transferred, guests registered and general confusion mixed with gay peals of laughter - all of which soon subsided as we could rest that we might begin a new day well....²⁵

The number of visitors to Indian Springs in the 1850s must have been far greater than in previous decades. Edward Varner was not the only proprietor who sent stages to Forsyth twice daily to meet guests arriving there by train. Bryan Collier of the McIntosh House also had a stage line to Forsyth, and in 1858, he stated: "... a line of Coaches and Hacks will be in waiting at the arrival of every train ... distance 16 miles in 2-3/4 hours...."²⁶ In addition, there were guests who arrived on horseback or in private conveyances.

The Varners had numerous servants on hand to wait upon their guests. A ledger book for 1858 shows that 19 hands were hired for the season,²⁷ these servants bringing water from the spring, serving meals, stabling horses, handling baggage and attending the bath houses. The Varners also owned slaves who worked at the hotel. The family favorite was "Uncle Pat," who was for many years the chief cook and whose culinary talents were often remembered by guests in letters to the Varners.²⁸

There is no complete record of the number of guests that came to the hotel during each season. A sampling of some of the entries in an 1850s hotel register does give a general idea of the number of guests registering in one day. It also shows that the hotel did have guests during the winter.

July 16, 1852 - 23 guests
 July 19, 1852 - 17 guests and 4 servants
 July 20, 1852 - 20 guests and 4 servants
 December 8, 1855 - Mabries Menagerie Circus and Indian Troupe - 54 guests
 January 14, 1856 - 27 guests
 February 24, 1859 - 44 guests
 April 1, 1859 - Everett and Mays Varieties - 12 persons, 12 horses ²⁹

Some of the familiar names that appear on the registers are General John W. Burney of Monticello; Lucius Q.C. Lamar, Mississippi congressman and senator, secretary of the interior, associate justice of the United States Supreme Court; General Mirabeau B. Lamar, second president of the Republic of Texas; W.L. Yancey, congressman and confederate senator of Alabama; Judge Ebenezer Starnes of Augusta; Benjamin H. Hill of LaGrange, later United States senator from Georgia; United States Senator Robert Toombs; Congressman Alexander H. Stephens, later vice president of the Confederacy and governor of Georgia; Georgia poet Sidney Lanier; the Nisbet, Napier and Lamar families of Macon; William H. Byrom and family; and Sam Dent Varner and family. Miss Joe Varner also recalled that George White, author of White's Historical Collections of Georgia, stayed at the hotel while completing this book. Others, whose names are less familiar, came from as far away as New York, New Jersey, Cincinnati, Chicago, Baltimore, Texas and New Orleans, as well as from the neighboring states of Alabama, Tennessee and South Carolina. For the most part, however, guests were from Georgia and more specifically from Augusta, Eatonton, Forsyth, Griffin, Louisville, Milledgeville, Monticello and Savannah.

The fine service and large attendance at the springs in the 1850s is

further verified in the following article by the editors of the Federal Union in July of 1856:

Indian Spring

Last week we paid a short visit to this famous watering place. There is a large company already gathered there who seem to be spending their time very pleasantly. We stopped at Varner's and found everything comfortable and pleasant. Those who are staying with friend Collier at the McIntosh House were well pleased, and report favorably. Both of the hotels at the Springs are well kept, and the tables well furnished. Dancing is kept up alternately at one or the other every night in the week except Sunday and good music is provided. Whether for invalids seeking health, or for those in good health seeking pleasure, we feel confident that the Indian Spring is the best watering place in the Southern States. We saw persons immediately from Mont Vale Springs in Tennessee who report the crowd there very small, not over two hundred, and the fare rather bad. It is believed that there will be more company at the Indian Spring this summer than there has been for many years.³¹

Apparently, 200 guests were considered to be a small number and Indian Springs had far more. From this article also, it appears that the Elder House was not open that year. In order to accommodate over 200 guests, the Indian Springs Hotel and the McIntosh House had many cottages and tent spaces available.

One has to wonder what guests did to occupy their time, particularly if they stayed for several weeks, as many did. The nights were filled with dancing for the adults, and the men could gather in the tavern. For many guests, particularly the young, the widows and the widowers, the favorite pasttime was courting -- walks along romantic paths around the spring by day and dancing by night. For those who chose to walk the short distance to the spring, several trips were made daily to drink of and

bathe in the "health-giving" waters. Others rocked on the veranda while servants brought spring water to them. The Varners kept books on hand for their guests, and there may have been a billiard house for the gentlemen, a hold-over from the days of Henry Dillon. Card games were also a favorite activity, particularly whist. Activities were often planned for guests, especially on holidays such as the Fourth of July or May Day. On these occasions, picnics or outings to the High Falls on the Towiliga River and other scenic areas were in order, as well as barbecues on the hotel grounds.³²

A journalist writing for the Macon Telegraph in 1926 described the period of the 1850s at the Indian Springs Hotel. No doubt her information came from Miss Joe Varner, though the article may be slightly exaggerated. It stated in part:

They traveled by stage coach or in their carriages, or on horseback, to Indian Springs for a round of dances and gaities, at the Varner House.

It was not the old Varner House in those days. It was a building of imposing structure with a great ball-room on one side, quarters for hundred of slaves in the rear, stables for blooded horses, gardens of rare beauty, and winding paths, lover's lanes, leading to the Spring famous with red and white man alike for the medicinal value of its crystal water.

The cotillion, waltz and scottish were danced by the women in brocaded velvet gowns and rustling silks and men in stock collars, the chivalry of the Old South in their looks and manners. The names of the negro string band that played for these dances have come down to the present time as makers of such music that never will they be forgotten. Johnnie Butler was the fiddler. Bill Brown played the clarinet, Bell Brown played the bass fiddle. Through the throng of beautiful women and courtly men threaded the negro slaves bearing huge silver trays heaped with refreshments for the dancers. Brave days they were in Georgia's history, days of splendor and of plenty.

Barbecues were held which lasted all day long. To these festivities the entire countryside came, in courtly equipages such as the popular victoria was in those days.....³³

The ballroom played a significant role in the life of visitors to the Indian Springs Hotel in the 1850s. While the 1840s had been noted for the political activities at the springs, the 1850s were noted for the social occasions. The editors of the Federal Union, writing of the Indian Springs in 1856, stated: "Dancing is kept up alternately at one or the other [hotels] every night in the week except Sunday and good music is provided...."³⁴ Some of the dances were gala events. In 1856, the women at the springs hosted a grand affair in the Varner ballroom. The invitation read:

A GRAND
LEAP YEAR SOIREE

Will be given by the Ladies, at Varner's Dancing Saloon, at the Indian Springs, Georgia, on the Evening of Wednesday, 13th of August, which you are most respectfully solicited to attend.³⁵

[Following was a list of the Committee of Invitation. It included 32 names of women who either resided in the town or who were annual guests.]

Before the ball took place, the following article appeared in the Federal Union:

Leap Year Party

We are indebted to the courtesy of the Committee of the Leap Year Party, to be held at the Indian Spring on the 13th of next month, for an invitation to be present. If it is in our power to be present, we shall certainly accept the invitation tendered us by the Ladies, not that we are personally interested in the great question of the evening, but we feel it is the bounden duty of every man to diminish, to the

extent of his own influence, the miseries which afflict man and woman kind. And in no way can such an influence be better exerted than in wholesome efforts to facilitate the union of the unfortunate sojourners in the state of single blessedness. Old Bachelors of Milledgeville and Baldwin, and your name is 'union', hearken to the call! Brush up for the 13th of August, and make your appearance at Varner's on the evening of the same day, prepared for every emergency. Herein, fail not. The matrimonial Union expects every bachelor to do his duty.³⁶

An annual event at the Indian Springs Hotel was the "Grand Fancy Ball" or "Fancy Dress Ball." The following announcement of such a ball appeared in the Journal and Messenger on August 2, 1854:

The Indian Springs

There will be a Fancy Dress Ball at the Indian Springs, on tomorrow evening, under the auspices of the proprietors of the Varner House, who have recently completed and furnished a large and elegant Dancing Saloon, Mr. Collier the Proprietor of the McIntosh House, also advertises a Fancy Dress Ball, to be given on the 7th of September....³⁷

The Varners' invitation to the annual "Grand Fancy Ball" in 1859 read: "To be given at Varner's Dancing Saloon, Indian Springs, Georgia, on the evening of Wednesday, August 31st, and Thursday, September 1, which you are most respectfully invited to attend."³⁸ On July 24, 1860, a "Railroad Ball" was held at Indian Springs.³⁹ No one hotel was specified on the invitation, so it may have been co-sponsored by the proprietors of all three hotels. Although Edward Varner hired musicians to play for the dances, he may have joined in with the musicians on occasion. His receipts for goods often show the purchase of fiddle strings.⁴⁰

The Varners and their guests were often invited to social functions in nearby towns. One invitation addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Varner and

Misses Varner from "The Ladies of Macon" was for a "...Pic-Nic, in honor of the Military at Camp Oglethorpe...."⁴¹ Miss Joe Varner noted in her diary having attended the annual "Masque Ball" in Forsyth in December of 1863.⁴² In July of 1857, one Andrew Dunn of Forsyth sent Joe Varner an invitation to a dance he was giving and told her to bring a crowd with her.⁴³ No doubt many hotel guests rode Varner's stage to this event.

So it is clear that there were few dull moments during a sojourn at Indian Springs. After all, guests were the "bread and butter" for the hotel owners, so the proprietors were not likely to allow a guest to be unoccupied or unattended unless it was by the choice of the guest. Their efforts paid off, at least in the number of visitors who returned each year. As Elizabeth Reid of Turnwold Plantation wrote to Joe Varner after a visit to the Springs in 1859: "There is not a day but what I think of the pleasant time we all had at dear Old Indian Springs...."⁴⁴

The medicinal properties of the water continued to be a main feature of the advertisements for watering places, although accommodations seem to have been of equal importance by 1850. The proprietors could depend on their customers to corroborate their claims regarding the waters. The editor of the Masonic Journal in 1851 gave testimony to the proprietor's claims, writing here of the Indian Springs:

... To their high medicinal value, thousands can bear testimony, to which, after a trial in a severe bilious attack, we can add our own. Their diaphretic, diuretic, and cathartic properties, searching every pore of the system, freeing it from all vitiated humors, and correcting its various secretions, render them highly useful in most chronic affections, resulting from derangement in the functions of the liver, and other glands, the skin, and digestive organs, as well as in a variety of summer complaints.⁴⁵

Yet, underlying all of the fun -- the hustle and bustle -- the gaiety -- is good evidence that the story of the Indian Springs Hotel in the 1850s was not a success story. For all the money that the hotel took in from the many guests, even more was expended to operate the hotel and support the Varner family. While it is clear that Henry Dillon and other proprietors had financial problems, the Varners' problems seem to have been much more serious. At one point, the possibility of the hotel being sold at public auction existed. While Indian Springs, and particularly the Indian Springs Hotel, had become the most desirable, most-visited watering place in Georgia, it simply was not paying its way. This was due in part to the basic expense of providing all the necessary services needed to attract visitors. But it may have been due in part to a lack of financial management ability on the part of Edward Varner and his sons and the fact that Edward Varner was already 61 years old when he purchased the place.

It is interesting to note that although the hotel was operated by Edward Varner, he did not own any of the property.⁴¹ Henry Dillon sold the property to Jefferson M., Andrew J., and Clinton L. Varner, three of Edward's sons. The property was bought on credit, the Varners not receiving full title until 1858.⁴⁷ Edward Varner could not buy the property on credit because he had no collateral. The Jasper County property was in Cynthia Varner's name. By a marriage contract, her property could not be held liable for her husband's debts. The property was to pass to her sons if she chose to give it to them or if she died. They, therefore, could use it to secure credit.⁴⁸ In fact, she allowed them to mortgage it in 1852,⁴⁹ probably to help pay the expenses of their new venture.

Not only did Edward Varner not own any property at the age of 61,

but from the time he and his sons acquired the Indian Springs Hotel, they apparently over-extended themselves and incurred debts that they could not pay off even by selling their holdings. After purchasing the hotel, they bought other lots in Indian Springs and other areas of Butts County, all on credit.⁵⁰

The records of R.G. Dun and Company [now Dun and Bradstreet, but still a "mercantile agency" which reports business conditions and provides credit analyses on business firms around the country] are explicit in their rather dismal opinion of the Varners' business acumen. The record is on A.J., J.M. and C.L. Varner, although Edward Varner's role is noted at several points in the text of the report. The company's assessments for the 1850s are as follows:

- June, 1852 - Money is always collected out of this firm by suits, they are law abiding men, and pay all the debts accordingly.
- May, 1853 - Own consid. ppy. Keeps a hotel at Indian Springs, owe everybody & sued to every court.
- July, 1854 - Are gd. but slow. pay.
- January, 1855 - If solvt., about as much, if their propy. was forced to a sale at this time vy. much embarassed & sued on all occasions propy. encurred by a marriage settlement in favor of Mrs. C. the wife & mother of the firm.
- April, 1855 - Their tax return shows town prop. 10,500\$. Household & kitchen furniture 4m\$ aggregate value of all other prop. 3000\$ Their mother returns separate prop. Land \$8000. Negroes 13m\$. Aggregate of othr prop. 3000\$. The father has nothing & we think the debts of the sons & Fath. will take all they possess even if the mothers est. can be reached.

- June, 1855 - Immensely in debt, sued for thousands, & regarded as extremely doubtful, by some.
- November, 1856 - They have a plantation but the title is in another man's name (Whitfield) that owe 5m\$ on it - but it is worth up to \$8000. there abt. 30 negrs which belong to old V's wife, & after her death to the 3 sons, & her other 5 children. The hotel ppy. belongs to the firm it is in part-paid for, suppose it is w up to 4m\$, the old man failed once, has had many ups & downs, is usually behind & quite a specul. man he pays only when he is obliged to, a word to the wise he _____ the whole concern, C.L.V. is snd. got some ppy. by his wife, but it is settled upon her, he has the use of it (it amts. to abt. \$15000) the other 2 are single, the 3 boys are a chip off the old block, have no ppy. out of bus. would not advise or without gd. security they might be crd. now with the expectation of forcing the money out of them.⁵¹
- January, 1858 - Largely in debt. 15m\$ at least in judgment. Amt. of property liable to debts not sufficient. Generally considered \$1107 (In person)
- September, 1858- Aggregate value of ppy taxed \$60 returned by E.V. Son's return _____. E.V.'s wife large amt. of ppy. which after her death goes to the children. They are largely in debt's don't consid. them. Some parties have taken notes of "E.V. & Sons" endorsed by the old lady. The endorsement is of no benefit as cannot be subjected to the debts nor the income of it.
- June, 1859 - Greatly embarrassed _____ of chge for the better.
- September, 1860- R.E. \$15m Personal \$33,400. Under very heavy embarrassments. The debts of the two are about \$24m - all pretty much in judgment. They are hopelessly insolvent. The Estate is vy. much dilapidated & there are 8 children.

The opinion of R.G. Dun and Company is supported by the records of the Varner family itself. In 1849, the sons purchased Lot 3, but they never received full title to it and in 1873, it was sold at auction, Cynthia Varner purchasing a portion of it.⁵² They purchased Lot 17, the ballroom lot, in 1853 on credit from R.L. Mott. In July of 1867, in a letter from Mott to Mrs. Cynthia Varner, Mott stated that the sons had failed to pay all of the principle and had paid no interest. He demanded either full payment or clear title to it. Finally, in 1879, Mrs. Varner made final payment and obtained title to the property.⁵³ M.E. Blount, whose husband had sold the Varner sons four lots totaling 12 acres in 1853, wrote to the sons asking to be exonerated "from all trouble respecting 12 acres of land sold to A.J. and C.L. Varner or have the land back or pay off the bond." They finally paid that debt five years later, obtaining title to it in 1858.⁵⁴ A legal agreement between Varner and Sons and David Elder in 1856 discusses unpaid promissory notes signed by Varner and Sons, for which they were being sued in the courts.⁵⁵ A few years later, their ownership of the hotel itself was threatened. Miss Joe Varner wrote to an attorney in 1875 regarding any claims he may have had against her mother. He replied;

I once filed a Bill for an injunction, in behalf of your mother against various persons, creditors of your Father and Brothers, to prevent the sale of the Varner property at Indian Springs. The sale was stopped by that bill and the War coming on - and the death of your Father and some of your brothers - delayed the trial a long time. Judge Trippe at length made some arrangement about the case and ended it....⁵⁶

So, only by a tragic fate were the Varners able to retain ownership of the hotel.

This is not to say that the Varner men were anything but honest and hard-working. Indeed, they were both. R.G. Dun and Company even made that concession.⁵⁷ But they were speculators, a risky business for men without much business ability or capital. Edward Varner had suffered reverses long before moving to Indian Springs. In fact, the course of events in Indian Springs was not unlike that of Edward Varner's circumstances in Eatonton some 35 years earlier. Between 1810 and 1820, he purchased numerous lots in the town of Eatonton, where he resided and operated a store. But his property was heavily mortgaged, with estimates of his debt reaching \$32,000. Unable to pay his debts, he eventually lost everything, his property being sold at a sheriff's sale in 1824.⁵⁸ His marriage to Cynthia Byrom could have been his salvation, but she, wisely, entered into a marriage contract with him that absolved her estate from any liability for his debts. Hence, he was forced to move to her plantation in Jasper County. Then, 27 years later, he was again tempted to speculate. Perhaps someone convinced him that the hotel business would be a virtual goldmine. Unable to obtain credit of his own, Edward Varner had his sons buy the hotel and surrounding property.

In order to buy the property and in order to provide the services for their guests at the hotel, the Varners borrowed far beyond their capability to pay back. They were depending on the hotel to bring in enough money to meet their debts and to show a profit. But the hotel proved unable to pay its own way. Had the Varners been able to acquire the property without going into debt, the income from the hotel would probably have been enough to operate it and support the family. Instead, the firm went deeper and deeper in debt.

By 1856, Clinton Varner was in sound financial condition, having mar-

ried a woman with the means to support him, but the property was in her name and could not be counted on to assist in salvaging the hotel business.⁵⁹ By 1860, they were on the brink of disaster. Then, fate took over. The Civil War began, and within a year, both Andrew and Jefferson were dead. Edward Varner was an old man by that time, and in 1867 he was committed to the state asylum, where he died two years later. These events delayed the trial that would probably have taken the Varner property for public sale. In 1866, R.G. Dun reported that the firm was "all broke."⁶⁰ But the war, the deaths of some of the firm members, and some legal maneuvers on the part of Mrs. Varner's lawyer prevented the sale of the property. It was through the efforts of Mrs. Varner that their debts were finally paid and that the Indian Springs Hotel was kept in the Varner family for the remaining 93 years.

It is likely that the Varners did not realize in 1850 that the cost of operating the hotel would be so high. A few receipts for merchandise purchased by the firm have survived which shed light on the types of goods required and the cost of buying them. The receipts also show that few things were paid for in cash. As early as 1850, when they had just purchased the hotel furniture from Dillon credit, they bought 10 dozen cottage chairs, six rockers and 20 patent bedsteads, costing \$289. This bill was not paid in full until 1852.⁶¹ A receipt from a firm in Charleston in May of 1854 totaled \$304.05. It included a damask tablecloth with 10 dozen damask napkins, 20 boxes of towels, 18 cornices, two oilcloths, muslin curtains and cloth for clothes.⁶² A bill for the blacksmith for six months was for \$23.25 and was also put on credit.⁶³

An 1856 bill for \$270.10 included 107 items such as fabric for clothes, tobacco, flour, hats, shoes, fancy shirts, hair dye, gloves,

silk cravats, garden seed, stable equipment, nails, smoothing irons, flannel, a dozen goblets, candles, ribbons, silk, stamps, fiddle strings and many others.⁶⁴ Most of these items were for the personal use of the Varner family, whose members apparently believed that to be successful you must look successful. A bill covering June through September of 1859 for the same type of goods came to \$138.78. In 1860, they purchased 35 yards of muslin, 10 pairs of hose, 27 yards of plaid flannel, 24 yards of linen, 12 dozen towels, six dozen doilies, 52 yards of print fabric for furniture, 40 yards of homespun and 21 yards of damask.⁶⁵ These are only a small number of the bills that must have been incurred during the 1850s.

In addition, visitor services were costly. During the season, extra hands were hired. The Varners provided lavish bed and board for their guests. A stable of good horses was kept for the stage line along with space and forage for the guests' horses. Stages had to be bought and maintained and stage drivers paid for the entire year. Musicians were hired for the summer season. Menus were printed, invitations to balls printed and mailed around the state, and advertisements run in numerous newspapers. The income from the hotel was simply not enough to pay for goods and services and for the debts incurred in buying property. By the 1860s, the Varners had suffered financial embarrassment and tremendous personal misfortune as well.

The remarkable part of this story is that the Varners did survive -- that they did not lose their property. For 10 years, Edward Varner and his sons were able to stave off creditors and continue to operate the hotel in a grand style. But it was the Varner women, and more particularly Cynthia Varner, who actually saved the family property from public sale and finally paid off the debts. She had the injunction filed to

stop the sale of the property, and she paid off the debts on the mill lot and the ballroom lot. Before she died, the Indian Springs Hotel property was transferred by deed of gift, not to her two surviving sons, but to her two daughters, Joe and Amanda.⁶⁶ At her death, she left one-fourth of her estate to Joe, one-fourth to Amanda, one-fourth to the children of John C., and one-fourth to the children of Clinton L.⁶⁷

Although Cynthia Varner saved the property, it was not in her power to continue to operate it in the style of the 1850s, and the Indian Springs Hotel never again reached the heights of that decade. The price of making the hotel the finest watering place in Georgia was too high. It continued to operate for many years after 1860, but it was never again the scene of fashionable social occasions or political events. Cynthia Varner realized their financial limitations and refused to follow in the path that her husband and sons had taken.

NOTES

Chapter 5: The Indian Springs Hotel: 1850-1860

¹ U.S. Census, Georgia, Butts County, Indian Springs, 1860.

² Inventory of the furnishings of the Indian Springs Hotel, 1850, Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.

³ Commission from the United States Postmaster General to Edward Varner, appointing Varner as postmaster at Indian Springs, December 29, 1857, Varner Collection.

Bill from B.A. Wright to Edward Varner, February 24, 1858, for "furnishing plank and filling up Post Office...", Varner Collection.

⁴ Abstracts of chain of title to Lot Three in the Indian Springs Reserve, by Paul J. Varner, Varner Collections.

Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book F, p. 260.

⁵ Letter of R.L. Mott to Mrs. C.H. Varner, July 12, 1867, Varner Collection.

⁶ Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book G, p. 407.

⁷ The Southern Mutual Insurance Company of Georgia, Policy #3603, January 4, 1850, Varner Collection.

⁸ Ibid., Policy #10635, November 1, 1854, Varner Collection.

⁹ Briefs, Reminiscences of Miss Joe Varner, as told to her great-nephew, Paul J. Varner, ca. 1925, Varner Collection.

¹⁰ Letter of R.L. Mott to Mrs. C.H. Varner, July 12, 1867, Varner Collection.

¹¹ The Journal and Messenger, Macon, Ga., August 2, 1854.

¹² Briefs, Varner Collection.

The Journal and Messenger, May 21, 1851, p. 3, c. 5.

¹³ Chain of title to Lot Three or "mill lot," abstracted by Paul J. Varner, Varner Collection.

H.M. Edge, "Souvenir History of Indian Springs," The Indian Springs Echo, Indian Springs, Ga., 1874.

- 14 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book E, p. 266.
- 15 Georgia Surveyor General Department, plat of Indian Springs, 1828, Atlanta.
- 16 The Journal and Messenger, May 21, 1851, p. 3, c. 5.
- 17 Briefs, Varner Collection.
- 18 The Journal and Messenger, May 21, 1851, p. 3, c. 5.
- 19 Ibid., July 9, 1851, p. 1, c. 4.
- 20 The Federal Union, Milledgeville, Ga., June 3, 1856, p. 3, c. 3.
- 21 Ibid., p. 3, c. 3.
- 22 The Georgia Telegraph, Macon, Ga., July 6, 1858, p. 3, c. 5.
- 23 "Bill of Fare," Indian Springs Hotel, 1855, 1856, 1859, Varner Collection.
- 24 Fannin-Barnett Family Papers, letter of Joel C. Barnett to his wife, July 13, 1868, Indian Springs, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.
- 25 Letter of Miss Joe Varner to Forrest Varner, Indian Springs, February 28, 1928, Varner Collection.
- 26 The Macon Telegraph, Macon, Ga., July 6, 1858, p. 3, c. 6.
- 27 Indian Springs Hotel Ledger, 1857-1861, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.
- 28 Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, April 8, 1862, Varner Collection.
- Letter of W.J. Green to Joe Varner, Macon, October 16, 1861, Varner Collection.
- Letter of Amanda Musgrove to Joe Varner, Columbia County, Ga., April 24, 1867, Varner Collection.
- 29 Miscellaneous bills and receipts, 1850-1860, Varner Collection.
- 30 Indian Springs Hotel registers, 1852-1860, Varner Collection.
- The Macon Telegraph, Centennial Edition, 1926, "Indian Springs House is Noted," by Hazel Gewinner.
- Briefs, Varner Collection.
- 31 The Federal Union, Milledgeville, July 29, 1856, p.3.c.3.

32 Ibid.

Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1862-1870, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.

Invitations to Leap Year Soiree, 1856, and Grand Fancy Ball, 1859, Varner Collection.

The Macon Telegraph, Centennial Edition, 1926, "Indian Springs House is Noted," by Hazel Gewinner, Varner Collection.

33 The Macon Telegraph, Centennial Edition, 1926, "Indian Springs House is Noted," by Hazel Gewinner, Varner Collection.

34 The Federal Union, Milledgeville, July 29, 1856, p. 3, c. 3.

35 Invitation to a Leap Year Soiree, 1856, Varner Collection.

36 The Federal Union, July 29, 1856, p. 3, c. 3.

37 The Journal and Messenger, August 2, 1854.

38 Invitation to Grand Fancy Ball, August 31, 1859, Varner Collection.

39 Invitation to a "Railroad Ball," July 24, 1860, Varner Collection.

40 Receipt for Edward Varner and Sons, January-December, 1856, and January, 1856-February, 1857, Varner Collection.

41 Invitation for the Varners to a "Pic-Nic," Varner Collection.

42 Diary of Miss Joe Varner, entry for December, 1864, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.

43 Letter of Andrew Dunn to Miss Joe Varner, July 1, 1857, Varner Collection.

44 Letter of Elizabeth Reed to Miss Joe Varner, September 19, 1859, Varner Collection.

45 The Masonic Journal, May, 1851, Vol. III (5), p. 197.

46 A search of the deed records for Butts County reveals that all property sold to the Varners was actually sold to the sons of Edward Varner. Also, the records of R.G. Dun and Company for the 1850s state that Edward Varner had nothing; its records are on the sons.

47 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book G, p. 442.

48 Ibid. Marriage contract between Edward Varner of Putnam County and Cynthia Byrom of Jasper County, July 5, 1823, pp. 361-62.

49 Jasper County Superior Court, Deed Book J, p. 241.

50 A search of the deed records for Butts County and the correspondence of the Varner Collection reveals that the Varners owned a number of lots in Butts County and that the grantors had difficulty in collecting their money from the sales.

51 R.G. Dun and Company, report on A.J., J.M., and C.L. Varner, 1852-1866, Georgia, Vol. 4, pp. 368, 371, 388, Baker Library, Harvard University, Boston.

52 Chain of title to Lot Three, Indian Springs Reserve, abstracted by Paul J. Varner, Varner Collection.

53 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book K, p. 401

Letter of R.L. Mott to Mrs. C.H. Varner, July 12, 1867, Varner Collection.

Letter of M.E. Blount to A.J. and C.L. Varner, February 12, 1853, Varner Collection.

55 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book G, p. 407.

56 Letter of John J. Floyd to Miss Joe Varner, Covington, March 27, 1875, Varner Collection.

57 R.G. Dun and Company, records for June, 1852, on A.J., J.M., and C.L. Varner, Butts County, Ga., Vol. 4, p. 368, Baker Library, Harvard University, Boston.

58 Interview with Mrs. Leila Brittain, Eatonton, February 23, 1978, by the author. Mrs. Brittain has done much research on the history of Eatonton. Information she gave on the real-estate holdings of Edward Varner and their disposal is from her careful search of the records of the Putnam County Superior Court.

59 R.G. Dun and Company, records for November, 1856, on A.J., J.M., and C.L. Varner, Butts County, Ga., Vol. 4, p. 368, Baker Library, Harvard University, Boston.

60 Ibid., August, 1866.

61 Bill for goods purchased by J.M. and C.L. Varner, June 25, 1850, Varner Collection.

62 Bill for goods purchased by E. Varner and Sons, May 31, 1854, Varner Collection.

63 Bill for blacksmith services for E. Varner and Sons, August 15, 1857, Varner Collection.

64 Bill for goods purchased by Edward Varner and Sons, January, 1856-February, 1857, Varner Collection.

65 Bill for goods purchased by Edward Varner, June, 1860-May, 1861, Varner Collection.

66 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book L, p. 193.

67 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book L, p. 193ff.

Chapter 6

THE DECLINING YEARS OF THE INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL

The financial transactions of the Varners in the 1850s and personal misfortune which included the deaths of several family members took their toll on the Indian Springs Hotel. The Civil War also brought near financial ruin for the hotel as well as for the mineral spring resort itself. The trappings of success were no longer evident. Like other families in Georgia in the 1860s, the Varners experienced "hard times" from which they never fully recovered.

After a decade of good service, gay balls and an appearance of prosperity, the Indian Springs Hotel began to show signs of deterioration around 1860. Amanda Varner, writing to her sister in 1861, stated that the house could not be repaired and that they would not be able to accommodate their usual crowd.¹ Joe Varner, writing to her brother Jeff in June of 1862, said that high prices had forced her father to stop running the stages, and he had even sold the horses. As a result, it was rumored that the hotel was not taking boarders.

The Indian Springs Hotel had few boarders that season, and while the Elder and McIntosh hotels had good crowds, most were invalids.² Mrs. Varner wrote to her son John that there were few boarders, times were hard, and prices high. It was hard to "keep a good table." Most food was sent to Macon for the wounded Confederate soldiers.³ The effects of the war were indeed substantial. Because of high prices and the family "breadwinners" being away in the war, many people were forced to give up such luxuries as going to "watering places" for the season. The war also

took some of the Varner men to the battlefield. John Clark Varner had enlisted by 1862 and lost an arm in the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia.⁴ Jefferson Varner was killed at Malvern Hill, Virginia, in June of that year.⁵

But the war was not the sole cause of the problems of the Indian Springs Hotel. The firm of Varner and Sons was gradually reduced to one person, Edward Varner, who was 73 years of age by 1862. Clinton Varner had previously moved to Houston County, and Andrew J. Varner died suddenly at Indian Springs in April of 1862, followed in June by Jefferson's death in the war. The same year, Edward was injured in a fall from a buggy, and Cynthia Varner, then 64 years of age, suffered a lengthy illness.⁶ The hotel had been a family operation in the 1850s, and the loss of and injury to the family members contributed much to the decline of the Indian Springs Hotel.

Additionally, the financial maneuvers of Varner and Sons in the 1850s only heightened the problems caused by the severe inflation of the war years. Creditors of the Varners, also hurt by high prices, were not so easy to stave off. Edward Varner, aged, injured from his fall and with no assistance available from his sons, was not able to meet the challenges and problems that faced him. At one point, he almost lost the hotel and property at Indian Springs due to the debts he and his sons had incurred. Mrs. Varner persuaded a judge to grant an injunction to stop the sale. Her lawyer later stated that the judge's action was due to the war and the loss of the members of the firm of Varner and Sons.⁷

The final blow to Edward came in 1864, according to family tradition. On November 17 of that year, the right wing of Sherman's army arrived in Jackson. On the following day, Wood's and Hazen's Division camped at

Indian Springs, waiting to cross the Ocmulgee River. The 110th Indiana Infantry had provost duty in the town.⁸ The Varners later sought war claims for the following items said to have been taken by the Federal troops.

4 horses	24 pairs of blankets
1 mule	200 bu. corn
3 wagons	3 tons hay
13 sets harness	6000 lbs. pork
5 cords wood	500 lbs. beef ⁹

Family tradition also claims that Edward Varner was mistreated by the Federal troops, leading to his mental deterioration.¹⁰ Whatever the cause, on June 26, 1867, Miss Joe Varner admitted her 78-year-old father to the State Lunatic Asylum.¹¹ No doubt, the hard times, the loss of two sons, and his age were also factors contributing to his mental illness. In February of 1869, Edward Varner died at the asylum and was buried in the Milledgeville cemetery.¹²

During the 1860s, the Varner daughters were away from home intermittently. It is known that Amanda was studying music in Cutbert in 1861 and 1868,¹³ and she may have been away during the interim years as well. Joe Varner moved to Byromville in Dooly County in 1863, where she ran a school until 1868.¹⁴ The responsibility of running the hotel after 1867, and probably earlier, fell to Cynthia Varner.

The Indian Springs Hotel did remain open throughout the 1860s, but the entries in the hotel registers are far less numerous than in days past. There are no accounts of balls in the "Varner dancing saloon" or political gatherings. The stage line had ceased operations. Miss Joe, who had become a Friend of Temperance, did not operate the tavern. In fact, the hotel was more of a boarding house than a resort.

Joe Varner kept a diary during the 1860s, and in it, for the year

1862, she recorded her daily activities at the springs. There was quilting, reading, caring for sick friends, attending church, and occasional trips to Forsyth. She did state in August of that year that "our crowd had been an unusually large one for these times." Then, in March of the following year, she moved to Dooly County, returning home briefly in August. She said that the hotel had been largely attended during the summer and that the visitors seemed "giddy, gay and wicked" in spite of the sad war news. In July of 1865, she again noted "company beyond my expectation."¹⁵ Apparently, enough guests stayed at the hotel during the 1860s to keep it going. Possibly, without the expenses incurred in the 1850s for balls, stage lines, a tavern, and other amenities, the Varners were able to break even on the expenses. At least, they were able to prevent the sale of the hotel and were able to keep it open. After 1868, Joe's entries in her diary are sporadic and yield little data on life at Indian Springs.

From around 1870 until 1900, the Indian Springs Hotel was known as the Varner House and was run by Joe, Amanda, and their mother. Each year brought fewer guests, and the Varner sisters did not have the financial capacity to improve the building to any great extent or to provide the services that guests demanded. New hotels were built in Indian Springs. The Elder and McIntosh hotels were enlarged and improved, and the Varner House was not able to compete. There were apparently enough guests, however, to support Joe and Amanda's frugal way of life. A financial report on Joe Varner in 1874 states that she had no capital, but was reliable and attentive to her business. By 1878, it was stated that her credit was bad and that the business had no capital. The following year, she was described as having no means -- a nice woman in straightened circum-

stances, yet meeting all promises to pay.¹⁷ Even so, an undated newspaper article, thought to have been written in the late 1870s or early 1880s, stated the following:

... The Varner House has had more visitors than it could accommodate. The cooking of this popular house is excellent and the table abounds with the best the country affords. The visitors all agree in saying that this house gives better accommodations than any other. Every effort is made by Miss Varner to make it pleasant and comfortable for the boarders....¹⁸

This reputation did not last, however. It is clear from a search of the Middle Georgia Argus from 1870 to 1900 that most guests stayed at other hotels that hosted balls, provided taverns and planned special events for the guests and who were constantly improving their facilities. The only account of improvement to the Varner House was in 1884, when the paper stated that the Varner House had received a good coat of paint.¹⁹ Joe stated later that the ballroom had been razed in the 1890s.²⁰

In January of 1882, a city directory for Indian Springs listed the "Varner House - By Misses Varner."²¹ In July of 1884, in a section of the Atlanta Constitution entitled "Summer Resorts," the following advertisement appeared:

Board can be had at the 'Varner House' \$30.00 per month, \$10 per week, children and servants half price. Good conveyances will meet each train to convey persons to and from the house.

Misses A. & J. Varner²²

At that time, there were still only three hotels at the springs. In addition, the popularity of mineral springs was increasing again after a decline during the war and Reconstruction. So, for a time, the Varner House had a good crowd during the season. But this success was brief,



Miss Joe Varner (left) and Miss Amanda Varner. Late-19th-Century photograph was taken at the southwest corner of the Indian Springs Hotel. [From the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.]

as the advent of new hotels resulting from the increased visitation of the 1880s proved to be too much competition for the Varner House. As these hotels gathered in the large crowds, the Varner House simply took the overflow. The Middle Georgia Argus chronicled the events at the springs and the arrivals at the major hotels. In 1884, it noted a "fine crowd" at the Varner House,²³ but after 1885, the Varner House was rarely mentioned.

After 1900, the Varner House became the gathering place for the Varner clan. Miss Joe expected the various branches of her family to come each summer, and they obliged, each group staying for at least two weeks. Descendants today can recall their childhood days spent with Miss Joe. They remember the ritual of going to the spring each day to drink the water, Miss Joe still being a firm believer in the cures of the water. The children played in Big Sandy Creek. Meals were often to be had at one of the other hotels. And all were required to go to "camp meeting" with Miss Joe if they happened to be visiting at that time.²⁴

In 1916, Miss Joe sold the house to the William McIntosh Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. This group hoped to get financial assistance from the State Legislature to assist in making the house a memorial and chapter house, but the funds were not available, and the property reverted to Miss Joe.²⁵

During the 1920s, Miss Joe's nephew, Forrest Varner, lived at the hotel also, along with his children, Earl, Milton, Paul and Corneil.²⁶ On October 24, 1927, Paul J. Varner, her great-nephew and son of Forrest Varner, bought the hotel, although Miss Joe retained the right to reside there during her lifetime.²⁷ At that time, according to family tradition, he replaced the old two-story porch with the present one-story shed porch.

He also divided the rear shed into smaller rooms, including baths. For the next seven years following Miss Joe's death in 1928, the house was used as a summer residence by the members of Paul Varner's family. Then, in 1935, Forrest Varner went there to live year-round and remained there until his death in 1953.²⁸ At that time, it was sold to Mr. J.H. Elliot, an antiques dealer from Madison and Atlanta, who operated a museum in the house for a number of years. Finally, on April 11, 1974, it was sold by Mr. Elliot to the State of Georgia.²⁹ It is now awaiting restoration by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, after which it will be opened to the public as a state historic site.

The fate of Indian Springs as a resort was not as grim as that of the Indian Springs Hotel. The Georgia springs experienced a surge of popularity that began about 1880. Approximately 30 mineral spring hotels were built in the state between 1880 and 1900. Indian Springs was the most fashionable of the late-19th-Century watering places, just as it had been in the ante-bellum period.

One stroke of luck for Indian Springs was the building of a rail line between Macon and Atlanta with a stop just two miles from Indian Springs. It began operation in 1882,³⁰ and within a few years, a "dummy" or connecting train was carrying passengers from the depot to the springs.³¹ Immediately a settlement grew up around the new depot which was called East End, while Indian Springs was also referred to as West End, and both comprised the town of Indian Springs.³² East End was later renamed Flovilla and was incorporated as a separate town.³³ The "dummy" train from Flovilla to Indian Springs continued to operate well into the 20th Century. Arriving at the Indian Springs, it would stop at the various hotels to leave the guests,³⁴ a convenient service which contributed to

the popularity of Indian Springs over many other mineral spring hotels. Soon after the advent of the Macon and Atlanta line stopping at Flovilla, new hotels were built, and between 1885 and 1900, five new hotels were erected. The Varner House and Elder Hotel were still there, but the McIntosh House had burned in 1883.³⁵

Although no significant activities took place at the Indian Springs Hotel or Varner House in this period, there was much activity taking place at the springs. In the 1880s, reunions of Confederate veterans were popular events and the old soldiers often met at Indian Springs. In July of 1884, a reunion there included a dress parade, a host of speakers, roll call of companies and a dinner. The local newspaper described it as the "biggest event in Butts since the war" and estimated the crowd at 3,000-4,000 people.³⁶

Balls were held each week at the hotels that had ballrooms. The music at these hotels was often noted by the newspaper. In 1882, it stated: "The Elder House and McIntosh both have a splendid string band, and the sweet notes of music is wafted by the gentle zepthers each day as the sun fades away in the western horizon."³⁷ In 1884, it was said that the Elder House had acquired an "Italian string band."³⁸

Another event of 1882 was a cadet convention. About 90-100 cadets stayed at the McIntosh House for three days. Their departure was followed by the arrival of a large group of ladies from Atlanta who brought a brass band along. They were followed by a large excursion from southwest Georgia.³⁹ This was the year that Indian Springs experienced its rebirth, due to the new railroad to East End. The Middle Georgia Argus stated: "Let them come, every man in the State ought to see the future grandest watering place that the South has ever known."⁴⁰ Indeed, these

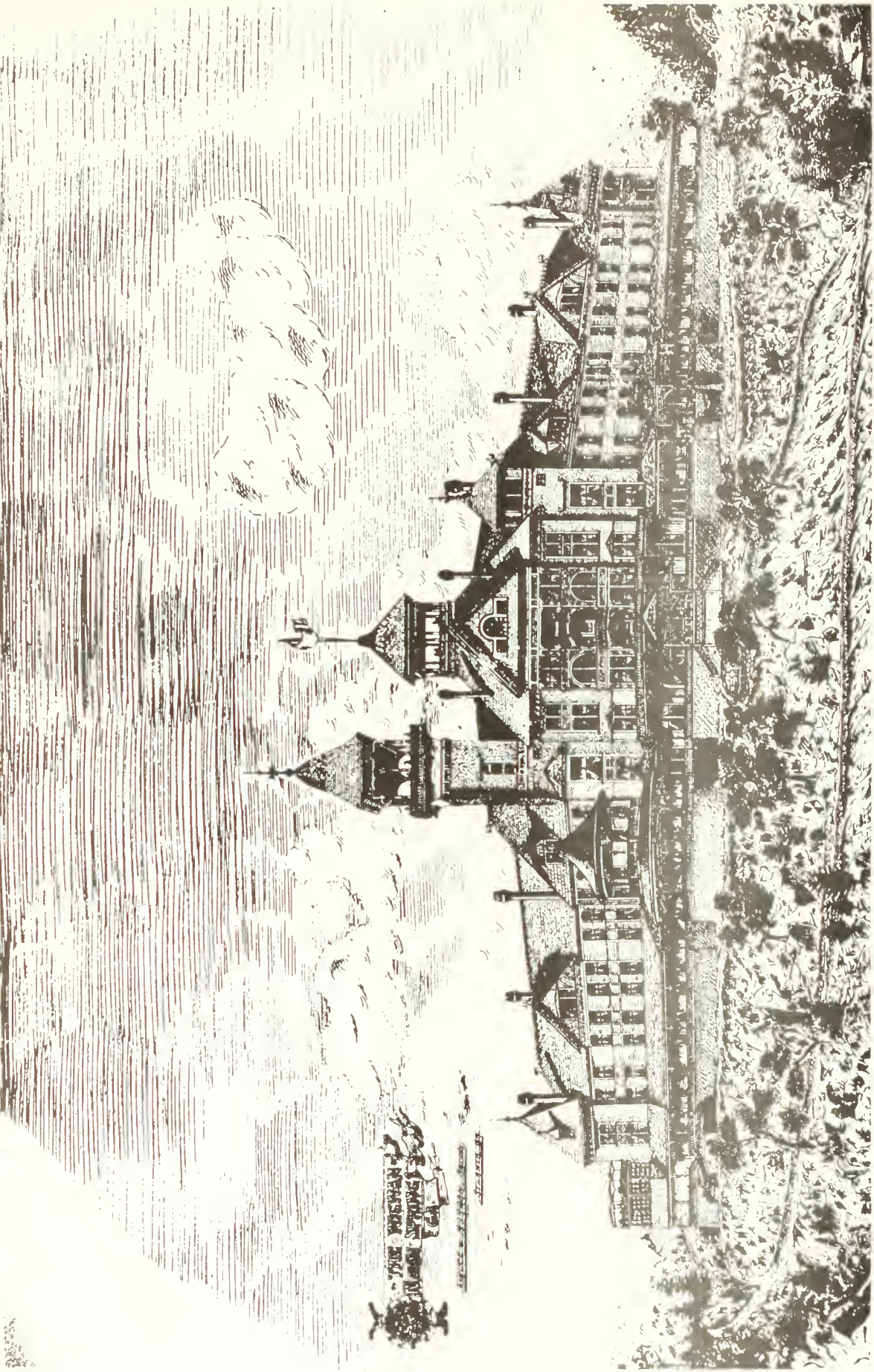
events were only a prelude to the future growth of Indian Springs as a resort. The crowd on a day in July of 1882 was estimated at 400, and it was stated then that 300 of them had never visited the spring before.⁴¹ In July of the following year, the newspaper stated that "... some of our citizens think the crowd at the Springs last Saturday was the largest assembled at that place since the war."⁴²

Political meetings were again held there. In July of 1884, advertising the event, the Argus wrote:

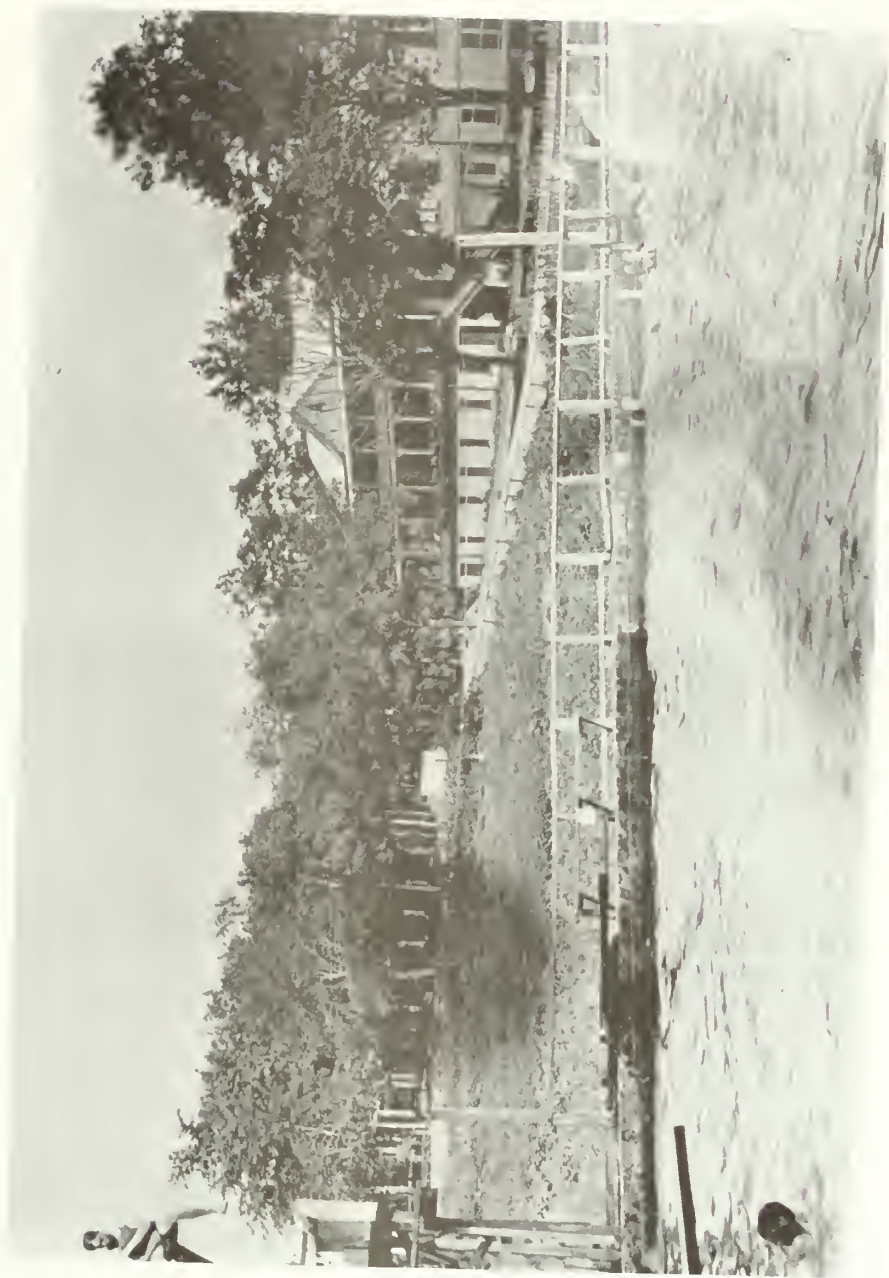
Everybody that visits Indian Springs next Saturday will be more than apt to meet with an agreeable surprise. Come down candidates. Everyone of you is expected to be here on Saturday next and speak for himself. A general picnic will be the order of the day. Col. Jim Blount will be here and make one of his big campaign speeches and a band of music will be in attendance.⁴³

As before the war, May Day was a major holiday at the Springs. That celebration was described in the Argus of 1885. A band played while people danced, strolled about and enjoyed a picnic. The Hilliard Institute cadets of Forsyth drilled and the newspaper claimed that the "... hills were thronged with people."⁴⁴

This new growth and increased visitation to the Springs brought about the need for new hotels. By 1885, the Heard House (later the Foy Hotel), the Calumet, Bryans House and others had opened, along with the improved Elder House. They offered the prerequisite of a resort hotel -- dancing, barrooms and modern conveniences. This growth culminated in 1890 with the building of the Wigwam Hotel, a huge Victorian showplace, said to be one of the largest frame buildings in the world at that time. [See architectural drawing of the Wigwam Hotel on the following page.] The Wigwam offered the latest in conveniences and amusements, including



An architect's rendering of the Wigwam Hotel, Indian Springs, Georgia. The hotel, when built, lacked some of the Victorian embellishment shown here. This drawing is from The Southern Architect, August, 1890, p. 135.



Foreground, The Foy Hotel; background, The Indian Springs Hotel. [The original is in possession of Mr. James Cornell, The Elder Hotel, Indian Springs.]



The second Elder Hotel, Indian Springs, Georgia, built in 1903. [The original is in possession of Mr. James Cornell, The Elder Hotel, Indian Springs.]

gas lighting, baths, casino, swimming pool, bowling and tennis courts. The fact that such a fine hotel was built at Indian Springs and that it flourished is testimony of the popularity of the springs.⁴⁵

The above are only a few samples of the events taking place at the springs during this era. Much more could be written, based solely on the weekly accounts of the news of Indian Springs chronicled in the Middle Georgia Argus. The information available is far too extensive to be included in the scope of this report. In addition, the Indian Springs Hotel or Varner House was actually a bystander for these events. By the 1880s, the Varner sisters were in their fifties. Their strict adherence to the tenets of temperance and their sedate lifestyle, in part, kept them from joining in the frivolity of the day. In addition, they were still plagued by financial hardship that prevented them from improving their facilities that would have enabled them to compete with the other hotel proprietors. A few loyal friends from years past returned each year to stay with them, and they sometimes accommodated the overflow from the other hotels, but as 1900 approached, their guests were few and far between. Miss Joe assumed her role as sage and storyteller of Indian Springs. Visitors went to see Miss Joe for her advice and her nostalgic reminiscences of days gone by. But they preferred to lodge in the new, modern establishments, and by 1900, the Indian Springs Hotel had ended its hotel career.⁴⁶ This old hotel had given Indian Springs the impetus for its early development. It was Indian Springs' first hotel, and for many years, its finest, and it had a history unequalled by any other hotel in the state.



The Bath House, Indian Springs, Georgia. [The original is in possession of Mr. James Cornell, The Elder Hotel, Indian Springs.]



Colonel Lamar's Mill, Indian Springs, Ga., built in 1873. [The original is in possession of Mr. James Cornell, The Elder Hotel, Indian Springs.]



Bridge over Big Sandy Creek, Indian Springs, Georgia. [The original photograph is in possession of Mr. James Cornell, The Elder Hotel, Indian Springs.]

NOTES

Chapter 6: The Declining Years of the Indian Springs Hotel

¹ Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, August 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga.

² Letter of Joe Varner to Jefferson Varner, June 25, 1862, Varner Collection.

³ Letter of Cynthia Varner to John C. Varner, dated sometime between April and June, 1862, Varner Collection.

⁴ Confederate Service Record of John C. Varner, Varner Collection.

⁵ Paul J. Varner, compiler, Genealogy of the Varner Family, Varner Collection.

⁶ Letter of Joe Varner to Jefferson Varner, June 25, 1862, Varner Collection.

⁷ Letter of John J. Floyd to Joe Varner, March 27, 1875, Covington, Ga., Varner Collection.

⁸ Georgia Historical Markers (Valdosta, Ga.: Baytree Grove Publishers, 1973), p. 54.

⁹ Copy of Civil War Claim of Mrs. C.H. Varner, War Department, Washington, D.C., 1873, Varner Collection.

¹⁰ Sherry L. Boatright, The McIntosh Inn and Its Place in Creek Indian History, "Interview with Mrs. Corneil Varner Davidson, Macon, Ga., 1975" (Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1975), p. 97.

¹¹ Statement of Birdie V. Sanders found in the Varner Collection.

¹² Varner family Bible, death record of Edward Varner, Varner Collection.

¹³ Letter of Amanda Varner to Joe Varner, August 8, 1861, Cuthbert, Ga., Varner Collection.

Letter of Fannie _____ to Joe Varner, April 5, 1868, McLeman Co., Tex., Varner Collection.

¹⁴ Diary of Miss Joe Varner, 1861-1901, Varner Collection.

¹⁵ Ibid.

16 Varner House Registers, 1870-1900, Varner Collection.

Indian Springs Business Directory, 1882, The Jackson Progress-Argus, January 12, 1882, p. 2, c. 4.

Lois McMichael, ed., The History of Butts County. (Jackson, Ga.: Daughters of the American Revolution, 1975).

17 Report on Miss Josephine Varner, R.G. Dun and Co., Georgia, Vol. 4, The Baker Library, Harvard University, Boston, Mass.

18 Scrapbook of Miss Joe Varner, undated, unnamed newspaper article, Varner Collection.

19 The Middle Georgia Argus, Jackson, Ga., April 13, 1882, p. 2, c. 1.

20 Briefs, reminiscences of Miss Joe Varner as told to her great-nephew Paul J. Varner, around 1925, Varner Collection.

21 The Jackson Progress-Argus, Jackson, Ga., January 12, 1882, p. 2, c. 4.

22 The Atlanta Constitution, "Summer Resorts," Atlanta, July 6, 1884, p. 2, c. 4.

23 The Middle Georgia Argus, July 15, 1884, p. 2, c. 4.

24 Interview with Ms. Lucille Dillon Flemister, Griffin, Ga., November 30, 1977, by the author.

25 Sketch of Indian Springs and Varner-McIntosh Memorial, William McIntosh Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Jackson, Ga., 1917, p. 20, and Erata Sheet.

26 Interview with Mr. Earl Varner, Swainsboro, Ga., June 15, 1977, by the author.

27 Butts County Superior Court, Deed Book 7, p. 125.

28 Boatright, "Interview with Mrs. Corneil Varner Davidson," p. 97.

29 Deed File, McIntosh Inn State Historic Site, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Planning and Historic Sites Division, Atlanta.

30 The Middle Georgia Argus, January 26, 1882, p. 2, c. 1.

31 Ibid., July 19, 1887, p. 5, c. 3.

32 Ibid., April 28, 1883, p. 3, c. 2; February 28, 1884, p. 2, c. 3-4; and April 1, 1884, p. 2, c. 3.

33 Ibid., July 28, 1885, p. 2, c. 3.

34 Interview with Mr. James Cornell, Jr., proprietor of the Elder Hotel, Indian Springs, Ga., June 10, 1977, by the author.

35 The Middle Georgia Argus, April 21, 1883, p. 3, c. 3.

36 Ibid., July 22, 1884, p. 2, c. 2.

37 Ibid., July 13, 1882, p. 2, c. 1.

38 Ibid., June 24, 1884, p. 2, c. 5.

39 Ibid., August 24, 1882, p. 2, c. 2.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., July 28, 1883, p. 3, c. 3.

43 Ibid., July 29, 1884, p. 2, c. 3.

44 Ibid., May 5, 1885, p. 3, c. 3.

45 Christine Park Harkinson, The Georgia Review, "Indian Springs," Winter, 1947, No. 4, Vol. 1, pp. 500-510.

Georgia's Health Resort for 100 Years, advertising booklet for the Wigwam Hotel, in possession of Mr. James Cornell, Jr., Elder Hotel, Indian Springs, Ga.

46 Varner House Registers, 1900-1928, Varner Collection.

Boatright, "Interview with Mrs. Corneil V. Davidson, p. 97.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Items From The
Varner Family Papers

DEATH OF MRS. CYNTHIA VARNER NOTED

The following was written by J.T. Burney on December 18, 1882, concerning the death of Mrs. Cynthia Varner. It is among the papers held in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Mrs. Cynthia Varner

This remarkable and interesting lady expired last Saturday at Indian Springs, Georgia, where she had resided for the last thirty years.

Although Mrs. Varner has been very feeble for a long while and her death was constantly expected, the announcement will be none the less regretted by a large circle of acquaintances who held her in very high esteem.

If she had not possessed [sic] mental gifts of so high an order as to command the respect of every one she met, and social virtues that inspired the warmest sentiments of regard, her death is sorely lamented on account [sic] of her being the last link that binds this new era to the primitive days of the commonwealth.

When young she was beautiful and wealthy, and received the homage of several gentlemen of the 'old school' who aided in making history and stamped their impress upon their times. She was a belle in the days of knee breeches, silk stockings and silver buckles- when the bearing of men toward women was marked by knightly courtesy, and all transportation was by carriage, coach or on horseback.

She lived to witness the rapid strides of progress, in which she always felt a very warm interest.

This old lady was a phenomenon, her personal experience covered three-fourths of a century-her reading was also varied and extensive, and her memory as to names, dates etc., was marvelously accurate, and possessing rare conversational powers she was the best raconteur I ever met.

Unlike most old people she by no means 'lived in the past', but had a keen interest in passing events, and read the daily papers with the avidity of a journalist.

I have lost as devoted, and certainly the most interesting lady that I ever had; I only regret want of time to speak of her as I feel.

Notwitstanding [sic] her great age and physical infirmities, her splendid intellect was undimmed by time, and thus she was fully able to appreciate the unswerving and poetic devotion of her daughter, Miss Joe Varner, whom thousands of good people respect as a worthy daughter of such a mother.

December 18th, 1882.

J.T. Burney.

NEWSPAPER NOTICE OF DEATH OF MISS AMANDA VARNER

The following is taken from an undated copy of the Jackson Progress-Argus, Jackson, Georgia, located in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia. Miss Amanda Varner's death occurred on March 29, 1915.

MISS AMANDA VARNER DEAD

End Came at Age of 80 Years

She Was Widely Known

Miss Varner Intimately Associated With
History of Indian Springs - The Funeral Held Tuesday

The death of Miss Amanda Varner, which occurred at her home at Indian Springs Monday morning, removes one of the best known and widely beloved women in Middle Georgia. Death came after a ten days illness of sciatica and other complications.

She would have been 80 years old in May and during her long and useful career was intimately connected with the history of Indian Springs. The family moved to Butts county early in the last century and settling at Indian Springs have contributed much to the development of this section. The male members of the family were noted for conspicuous gallantry in war. For the past fifty years or longer the Misses Varner, Amanda and Joe, had occupied the historic Varner house, erected by William [Mc]Intosh, the Creek chieftain in 1823. This famous hostelry is still preserved in its original quaintness and it is this old Indian cabin that the Daughters of the American Revolution of Georgia have considered buying that it may be preserved, together with the collection of history-making relics, for future generations.

Miss Varner probably knew as many of the distinguished men of Georgia for the last fifty years as any citizen in the state. She was by birth and training a daughter of the Old South and her charity and benevolence was extended to every worthy cause. She was a faithful member of the Flovilla Methodist Church,

which, it is stated, she bequeathed a substantial remembrance.

Miss Varner is survived by a sister, Miss Joe Varner, who has been her devoted companion for a great many years; Mrs. Charles White, Griffin, Mrs. Birdie Saunders, Newnan, Nevin Jordan, Monticello, F.G. Varner, Macon, Mrs. Callie V. Dean, Griffin, Kenan and Gordon Varner, Alexander, La., W.P. Varner, Rutledge, Miss Annie Carter, Madison, Mrs. Julia Varner Chapman, Taiban, N.M., Dr. Joe Newson, Atlanta, Miss Fannie Newson, Davisboro, Mrs. Julia Varner Bacon and Weldon Varner and family, Madison, Mrs. Wimberly, Mr. Brown Wimberly and Mrs. Mary Robson, Macon, nieces and nephews; also Mrs. Robson's two little daughters, who are great-great nieces of Miss Varner.

The funeral took place from the Varner residence Tuesday morning at 11 o'clock and was attended by many friends and relatives. Rev. J.T. Pendley of the Flovilla Methodist church conducted the services. Numerous and beautiful floral tributes showed the esteem in which the deceased was held. The body was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Indian Springs.

The following were the pall-bearers: Messrs. R. Troup Smith, Willie Ogletree, L.D. Hoard, Wright Watkins, N.J. Jordan, Ben Cleveland.

MISS JOE VARNER'S BIRTHDAY OBSERVED

The following is an article which appeared in The Jackson Progress-Argus, Jackson, Georgia, on Friday, June 22, 1928.

MISS JOE VARNER OBSERVES
HER NINETY-FIRST BIRTHDAY

Hearty good wishes and cordial congratulations are extended to Miss Joe Varner upon the occasion of her ninety-first birthday Sunday, June 17. Joining in these felicitations are thousands of friends in Butts county, Georgia and the entire South.

Miss 'Joe' is not only one of Butts county's oldest citizens, but is one of the most widely beloved women in the state. She is probably known to as many people as any citizen of Georgia, and all who know her esteem and love her. She is ninety-one years 'young' because she retains an alert interest in young people, has scores and scores of young people who are 'my boys' and 'my girls.'

Born June 17, 1837, near Monticello in Jasper county, Miss Joe moved to Indian Springs when a small girl and during her long and eventful life as resided in the historic Varner House. This is one of the most interesting places in Georgia. Here many of the important treaties with the Indians were signed. Here General William McIntosh lived. Here, particularly in the antebellum days, gathered the statesmen and politicians of Georgia.

The Varner House was acquired some months ago by Mr. Paul J. Varner, of Brunswick, who it will be recalled, financed the Redfern flight to South America. The property has been modernized in every particular, yet the main features of architecture have been retained, and the Varner House, now used as a summer home by the Varner family will continue to be a shrine.

Miss Varner is the last surviving member of a large and prominent family. She is a daughter of Edward Varner and Cynthia Hardwick Fitzpatrick Varner, pioneer settlers of this part of Georgia. For more than a hundred years the Varner family have played an important part in the growth and development of Georgia.

Miss 'Joe' possesses a rare fund of information about Indian Springs and this part of Georgia. She is familiar with the old Indian trails, she knows much unpublished history of Butts county. The museum in the Varner House contains many interesting and valuable relics and a visit to the springs is not complete without a visit to this historic inn and an interview with Miss Joe.

Her years have weighed lightly upon her and she has grown 'young' gracefully. She is remarkably well preserved in mind and body and is always glad to welcome her friends.

REMINISCENCES OF MISS JOE VARNER

The following are reminscences of Miss Joe Varner as told to her nephew, Mr. Paul J. Varner, ca. 1928. The original is in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

BRIEFS.

1.

(All information given by Miss Joe Varner, unless otherwise indicated.)

The Varner House was started in 1815 and finished in 1818. McIntosh furnished the money and a man by the name of Hitchcock did the work. Hitchcock formerly built the county court house at Monticello and previous to that he built a courthouse in Clinton, S.C. Soon after its completion a man by the name of Joel Bailey went in partnership with him and ran the building as a hotel under his management for many years. Hitchcock was a very fine brick mason and made the brick which were used in the chimneys now standing. He also built the chimneys personally and did all the measuring and important cuttings. All the lumber was cut near-by and most of the nails were hand made. The doors are of Saler Pitcher type and it is supposedly known that they came from New England.

There were formerly four annexes on the north side of the house. They were connected by a covered porch and were two storys [sic] with four rooms up and four rooms down. All these rooms (36) [32] were guests rooms. All of the eating was done in the main part of the house.

The present well was dug in the early 70's. Previous to this the water came from a spring directly back of the house and is now practically dried up. At one time the well nearly caved in and large cracks were in the ground all around it and people were scared to go near it in fear of their lives.

Indian Springs was once a great place for state politicians to meet. The years of meetings were always divided one year it was held at Stone Mountain and the next at Indian Springs. It was a contest between the places as to whom would have the biggest barbecue. Indian Springs always had their meeting on the

hill where the Lawson house now stands. Firey-tounged [sic] orators spoke all day and at night a big ball would be held that would last till daybreak. These festivities lasted usually about three days.

The old ball room stood on the vacant lot on the south end of the house and was one story with a basement. The upper story was used for the dance hall and the bottom was used as a bar-room where the best of whiskeys brandies, and ales were served. This ball room was built shortly after the house was built and was razed in the 90's.

To the best of Miss Joe's knowledge there have been four porches. The dinning [sic] room at one time was five feet wider and longer than it is now. There have been several minor alterations previous to last year. What is now Miss Joe's bedroom was once a private sitting room and later a play room for children. The big room next to her bedroom was the parlor. In it was the big piano, lounges, books, and etc. What is now the sitting room was the lobby of the hotel and was after the War converted into Miss Joe's bedroom and private room. What is now the library was once McIntosh's room and later Miss Amanda's bedroom. All other rooms upstairs were guest rooms.

Miss Amanda Varner set out the trees now in front of the house. Previous to then there was a beautiful lawn with green grass.

Briefs

2

BED in Aunt Joe's room was made for her father before he moved to Indian Springs. After the Civil War she had to sell some of the beds on account of the hard times at hand.

PIANO was brought here in the 80's and the old one was disposed of. The piano was bought from a man who needed the money and he stated that it was very old.

PICTURES in Aunt Joe's room were made in 1850 at Indian Springs. She was 13 years old at the time. The picture of two figures are Aunt Joe on the left and her cousin on the right. The single picture is Aunt Joe's mother Cynthia Varner.

LEATHER TRUNKS were bought by Aunt Joe in New York at the price of \$41.00 each in 1900. She made one a present to her sister Amanda Varner.

CLOCK in Aunt Joe's room was given to Cynthia Varner before 1850 or around that year by a Dr. Saunders and has been running practically every [sic] since. It is an Ansonia.

GLOVES belonged to Aunt Joe's mother and are linen. She wore them the day that she was married.

SHOE in the small trunk was one worn by Aunt Joe's brother's wife. She was a Miss Callie Pearson of Monticello and married Sam Dent Varner.

LOCKS on the doors came from England and also some of the brick. Part of the brick were made here.

CHEST with the two draws [sic] in it was make [sic] in Milledgeville by a man named Beardin. Beardin was in prison there and made it while serving a term there. After his pardon came or term expired Aunt Joe's father brought him to Monticello to work on his farm. This was in 1824.

SINGLE four posted bed has been in family as far back as she can remember.

WOODEN TRUNK has been in family always.

PICTURE in the parlor is an old Greek scene and is entitled 'Eissologil' and represents the last battle of the Greeks in some war. Aunt Joe's father bought it early 18's [1800s?].

COTTON in museum was raised in Jasper in 1841 and is of the Nankeen variety.

SMALL shoes were worn by all of Aunt Joe's brothers and sisters when they were babies.

CANDLE moulds were used by Aunt Joe's mother and also Aunt Joe, and dates back as far off as 1800 or before.

WAITER is the most priceless of anything according to Aunt Joe and is over 125 years old. This water [sic] was one used at the Varner [House] many years before the civil war and came from England.

COTTON cards was [sic] used by one of the slaves on the place and the exact age is not known.

Briefs

3

CARPET bag was bought in Milledgeville by Edward Varner and was used on all of his trips. This bag is the same kind that make the 'Carpet-baggers' so well known during the Civil War period.

POT hooks were given to Aunt Joe.

BULLET mould was given to Aunt Joe.

CANDLE sniffers [sic] has been in the family as long as she can remember and she can't recall exactly the date it was brought into her family.

SHOVEL with a hole in the center was made in South Carolina and Aunt Joe's Father bought them when a young man.

COAT in the case was one used around 1830 by Aunt Joe's brother. He was the head of the Militia in his district around Monticello.

PICTURE in office is that of Governor Troup's grave can't recall where he is buried.

HENRY Dillon bought the Varner House from 'Mathis'. Mathis had bought the house from Joel Bailey and McIntosh. Aunt Joe's father Edward Varner bought the house from Henry Dillon.

DOOR facings were carved with jack knives.

BROWN bag in small trunk was a mesh bag and is made of silk. This bag was used by Aunt Joe's mother when she married.

CHECKERED bag is known as a 'housewife' and was used to keep matches and small trinkets. This also belonged to Aunt Joe's mother.

HAT in trunk was given to Aunt Amanda for a Christmas present by a Mrs. Elder long before the Civil War.

SPINNING wheel has belonged to Aunt Joe for about forty years. She bought it with the reel and part of the loom from a Mrs. Harris for \$1.25. Mrs. Harris stated that the spinning whell [sic] had been in her family as long as she could remember and had once belonged to her mother.

BROKEN SWORD has belonged to Aunt Joe for many years and was found by some small boys near Indian Springs. An inscription near the hilt says: 'Artillary [sic] Fabrica Toledo 1369(?)'.

WOODEN CANTEEN has a date carved in it '1864.' Aunt Joe doesn't recall where she got it.

CHESTS. Aunt Joe's father had the large chest made about 1825 and was used to put bed-clothes in. The small chest in the office was left here before the Civil War by a travelling show.

DEMAJOHN was bought by Aunt Joe's father in 1815 full of some 'liquid' to cure some sickness in the family. The vinegar in it now was made before the Civil War by Aunt Joe.

SHALL [shawl] is made of fine silk and belonged to Aunt Joe's mother. She married in the shall and had it when a young woman.

LETTER FROM MISS AMANDA VARNER TO MISS JOE VARNER

The following is a letter written from Cuthbert, Georgia, on April 8, 1861, by Miss Amanda Varner to her sister, Miss Joe Varner. The original is located in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Cuthbert
April 8, 1861

Dear Joe,

I received your long looked for letter last night. It will be three weeks tomorrow since I had one before I was getting real mad, knowing how well you liked to write. I was disappointed in not getting what I wrote for, but the disappointment will not kill me as I have long since met with many such, but still, disappointment is something that we never get use to. You said if I could not be happy here to come home, so far as that is concerned I am as happy here as I could be anywhere. I could not give up my music now for anything, all I regret now is that I cannot continue until I am satisfied with playing well. I was as awkward when I commenced under Mr. _____, as if I never had taken a lesson before. Tell Sallie I fear she will beat me learning, I have taken five pieces. (You say she has taken 4 or 5.) I think Ma is early going to Macon, but this is going to be an early season. Bud Early says nearly everybody will be at the Springs this summer. I am sorry our house could not be repaired, I think we will not be able to accommodate the crowd. I wish you could go to Macon soon and get what we will need, I will be compelled to have a large covering of some kind if I go out anywhere. One would do us both this summer, Can't you get them from Mr. Swanson. I have plenty common dresses; one nice church dress and a white Swiss will do me. You must send me some nice stockings anyhow, you know what I bought were coarse, only 3 pair at that. The ladies here are all out in summer rigging already, everything is so forward here. You never saw such gardens, our pea vines have young peas on them. Everything is at least a month earlier here than at home.

Joe left last Wednesday for Florida, Mr. Pat Gomley of this place was going on business and asked Joe to go with him for

company. They went in a buggy. They will have a good opportunity of seeing the country.

Joe you must not forget haveing [sic] my flowers shaded well, notice for the label, on my Atlanta roses don't let the little negroes destroy them. What is Mrs. Park and the Col. doing and why don't Georgia come home? I wish I could be at Mrs. Park's a little while to get something good. Does she hear from T___ now? Write me all the news. I almost wish I could be at home when Puss is there. Will Lucie go up with her? I promised to select Lucie some music but have not heard any yet that I like. Ann sent me three suits of beautiful linen clothes to make for Jack. I told him I would make him some clothes, he was here last Sunday, saw the Omnibus go by and cried of there's Jolly's coach. I guess Bud Jack sent the linen.

What is Cally doing? I wrote to her some time ago, thought she would certainly have written before now. You need not ask me to the wedding don't think I could stand to see you married. I don't object to Dick think you could never do better; I have not written to Nora Cohen yet. Tell Dr. Whitehead to write to her. I am sorry for your loss hope Emeline was not guilty. Mr. M.C. Lasen would hate it so much. What has become of him? Tell Kit not to forget the blue gloves she was going to knit for me. Puss Camp told me she was going to knit me some. How is Puss getting on now. Give my love to Uncle Pat. I wish I had some of his beef steak. I could make it fly. Ann sent me a bottle of French mustard by Jack. It is splendid. Nobody likes it here but me. When will the horses come home. I expect I will be for coming when I here [sic] the stage is running, but I will stay until June if nothing happens to call me home. Write me all the late War news. It is only by chance I can get a paper here. I wish I could get the Telegraph, haven't seen one since here, Joe. Joe, I hope you won't fail to write to me once a week anyhow. _____, you don't know how disappointed I was all last week. Has Ma give out coming down? I don't think she could stand the trip to come and be hurried back, tell me who all the boarders are, this is my last stamp. They say there is none in Town, send me some. Love to all at home. Excuse pencil, pens are scarce.

(Amanda)

LETTER OF MISS JOE VARNER TO JEFFERSON M. VARNER

The following is a letter written by Miss Joe Varner to her brother, Jefferson M. Varner, who never received the letter, as he was killed in battle before it reached him. The original is in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Indian Springs, Ga.
June 25, 1862[?]

Dear Brother:

A few day's since, we received a short note from you, the first, I think directly to us, in about a year. I couldn't tell you how glad we are to know that you are alive and unhurt. When so many noble ones are falling, it is scarcely more than we can hope to have both of you spared throughout this long war, but God does things in His own right way. If you are spared, I hope it will be for some good purpose.

I couldn't tell you what a great change in everything here--if you should drop down, you would never imagine this to be the Springs of former days. You seldom see a familiar face--nearly all are invalids here. Now and then a strong hearty fellow who is shirking from Military duty.

The wheat harvest has just been gathered in, as complete a failure as you could imagine. Not one in a hundred has made the seed. They planted, but if the corn turns out well, we can live without the wheat. The corn is very small, but looks green and nice, although we are needing rain so badly.

Pa is not attempting to run stages this summer. It would be useless for him to think of such a thing at the present high prices of everything. He has sold three of his horses. I suppose he was compelled to.

Collier has a good crowd, so has Elder. We have but few in consequence of not running stages. The

report is everywhere that we don't take boarders.

You heard about the fall Pa got from his buggy sometime since. I thought he would never recover, but he is nearly well now. Ma has been very feeble, but is a little better now. A while back she could scarcely creep about. I believe the negroes are generally well at the plantation except old Aunt Chany. She is old and low down now. We wouldn't be surprised any day at her death. Adaline had pneumonia in March and Pa brought her up here thinking she would soon be cured, but she lingered until last Sunday, when she died. The poorest mortal you ever saw.

Do you get to see many of your old friends around Richmond? I had a letter from Lt. Tom Carter. He is yet suffering with his foot. Since Brother Jack's death, I've wanted to write you and General [brother John Clark] a long letter, but have felt very little like doing anything and now I couldn't get a _____ morning or evening if I wished it. We don't have _____ much company but I have a thousand little hindrances every day.

Joe Varner is here to assist Pa, but he is a weak inefficient fellow.

Ma received a letter from General today. He said something about wanting shirts--we will send some the earliest opportunity.

I believe I've heard you speak of Judge Meeks of _____. He came to the house this evening. Dr. White had just left his _____ to spend the summer at home. His health is too poor to follow up the Army. Capt. Watron is very feeble. The wound on his head is a bad looking place. Dave Patterson of the 14th Regiment came home a few days since. He told me he saw you and General in April. Bailey's regiment is on the crash yet _____-armed. Two of his men brought home dead yesterday. They have averaged one or two every week this summer.

Did anybody write you about old Andrew's horse's death? He was pulling a load of boards up the hill. His bone broke just above the knee and we had him shot.

We have just heard that Harrison Mobley is dead. I suppose the poor fellow had no friend with him. Did you see over boy's burial?

Mrs. Head thinks she will get Billie's remains. Do you think she can?

It is hot and dusty here. Tell General I will write to him soon. Sis wrote to him just two days ago. Can't you see Lt. Col. Bill Jordan of the 4th Ga.? His wife is here.

All send love. Destroy this letter.

Yours,

Joe

LETTER OF CYNTHIA VARNER TO JOHN C. VARNER

The following is a letter written by Cynthia Varner to her son, John C. Varner, on June 26, 1862. The original is in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Indian Springs, Ga
June 26th, 1862.

My dear Son:

I have wished for a long time to write you. I think of you very often and wish very much to see you. You must be careful of your self, and when you go into battle wear citizen's clothes. I am greatly obliged to Jeff and you for your timely aid. I do not know what I should have done without it. Times are harder now than ever, bacon thirty seven and half cents per pound, sugar --- cts, butter 20, flour 25 per barrel. I have only a few boarders, but as many as I can well feed. Mr. Collier has perhaps 40 boarders, Mr. Elder very few. Uncle Pat cooks for me, and I am put up to all I know to get anything to cook and keep a good table. Everything is sent to Macon and other places. There are a great many sick soldiers that must be fed. I would like so much my dear son to see you. Every one speaks so highly of you. I assure you it makes me very proud of you. You don't know how often I think of you, and how I wish to see your dear face once more. Be sure to take care of your self, and remember you have a mother that loves you and prays God will care for her darling son and protect him from all harm. I cant tell you how often I think of you and wish to see you, and be near you.

I trust God will spare you and send you safely home to your affectionate mother. You must write as often as you can for I feel very anxious when I dont get letters, so be sure and write as often as possible.

Last spring when Jack died the water was so high I could not carry him to Jasper, but next fall I wish

him moved, Let it cost what it may. His death, my son, was a great blow to your poor mother. Much that made life pleasant vanished when he left me, but you are left to me. You must be a good son, I know you will for I believe you love me.

Write and tell me if you need clothes. I have a lot of socks if you need them. My health is not good. Your father suffers greatly from his shoulder. Last winter while at the plantation he fell from a buggy and hurt his shoulder badly, and this spring he went in the country and just before he got home he fell out of the buggy and hurt his face. Mandy wrote you yesterday. Joe went to Jackson today.

Joe Varner I expect will stay with us this summer. He left the army on account of ill heath. Everything is dull, and every thing seems sad and gloomy to me. Georgia says she is writing you a long letter. Callie is sick, but not very. Adline died Sunday. The negroes at the plantation were well when I last heard. None of Clinton's family have been up. Tell Jeff I intend this letter for him as well as yourself. Manda sends love, and Joe and Callie also. Write soon and tell me about your clothes. Mrs. Park heard Fred was going to join the regulars. Dont let him do it, it nearly ran his poor mother crazy. Dont let him think of such a thing. And now my dear son goodbye, God help you. Write soon to your affectionate mother.

C. Varner

P.S. Soon after this was finished I received a letter from you. I was very glad to hear. Be sure to write soon again. I will send the shirts as soon as I can.

LETTER OF J.A. NELSON TO CYNTHIA VARNER

The following is a letter written from J.A. Nelson to Cynthia Varner concerning her attempt to obtain the remains of her son, Jefferson M. Varner, who was killed at Malvern Hill, Virginia, where he was serving as a lieutenant in the Sixth Georgia Regiment, Confederate States of America. The original is in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Twiggs County
August 12, 1863

Mrs. Varner

Your letter dated the 16th of January was not received until today. I cant account for the delay of it. Ere this I know you have given up all hopes of receiving any information from me respecting your son. The time I wrote to you I was going to send for my son circumstances prevented my doing so. I did not get his remains home until the 24th of April. The grave was marked, each one's name was written on the board. The Chaplain of the Regiment whose name is Thigpen was the man that assisted in getting him. From what I understand his services can be had at any time for that purpose. And he was the only man that I could get. He knew exactly where the grave was. Dr. Bonds, the gentleman that went after my son said that not a feature could be recognized. An oil cloth that covered his face was not entirely removed, on account of his being so much decayed. His clothes were perfectly good, and by that means his body was managed as well as it was. The remains of your son and the other gentlemen were not interfered [sic] with at all. They were all buried only 8 inches under the ground. I procured a coffin in Richmond with all ease, it was only a common one. I could get nothing else. Any other information, Mrs. Varner, I can give you on the subject, I'll take great pleasure in doing. Mr. Thigpen knows the body of each.

Yours very respectfully

J.A. Nelson

INSURANCE POLICY FOR THE INDIAN SPRINGS HOTEL

The following is the insurance policy issued on the Indian Springs Hotel on January 4, 1850, No. 3603, for \$6,000.

The Southern Mutual Insurance Company.

In consideration of a note of hand, of even date herewith, given to said Company by Edward Varner Agent for Henry Dillon for the sum of ninety Dollars, one half of which has been paid in Cash, and endorsed thereon by which note said Edward Varner Agent to obligate himself and his legal representatives to comply with the provisions of the Act of Incorporation and By-Laws hereunto annexed, do hereby Insure said Edward Varner Agent for Henry Dillon and his legal representatives against loss or damage to him under the conditions and limitations expressed in the Act aforesaid, and subject to the lien upon said property, created by said Act for the term of one year from this fourth day of January 1850 at noon, until the 4th day of January 1851 - to the amount of Six Thousand Dollars, on the wood two story & one story buildings now in the occupation of Henry Dillon but to be immediately occupied by said Edward Varner known as the Indian Spring Hotel - including as well the Hotel proper and the building thereto attached as also the building on the opposite side of the street situate at the Indian Springs in the county of Butts and state of Georgia - being not more than three-fourths the value of the property described in the specification of said lodged with the Secretary of said Company.

be it that the absolute and conditional Funds of said Company are hereby bound and made subject to satisfy and all the damages, if more than five per cent which may happen to said property within the term aforesaid, not exceeding the amount above named, and according to the true intent and meaning of the Act and Rules aforesaid.

Provided always and it is hereby declared, that this Corporation shall not be liable to make good any loss or damage which may happen or take place by means of any invasion, insurrection, riot, or civil commotion, or of any military or usurped power.- And provided further, and in case the insured shall have already any other insurance against loss by fire, on the property herein insured, not notified to this Corporation and mentioned in or endorsed upon this Policy, then this insurance shall be void and

of no effect. And if the said insured, or assigns, shall hereafter make any other insurance on the said property, and shall not, with all reasonable diligence, give notice thereof to this Company and have the same endorsed on this instrument, or otherwise acknowledged by them in writing this Policy shall cease, and be of no further effect. And in case of any other insurance upon the property herein insured whether prior or subsequent to the date of this Policy the insured shall not, in case of loss or damage, be entitled to demand or recover of this Company on this Policy, any greater portion of the loss or damage sustained, than the amount hereby insured shall bear to the whole amount insured on the said property. And it is agreed and declared to be the true intent and meaning of the parties hereto, that in case the above mentioned property shall at any time after the making, and during the time this Policy would otherwise continue in force, be appropriated, applied, or used, to or for the purpose of carrying on or exercising therein any trade, business or vocation whereby the degree of risk is increased, unless herein otherwise specially provided for, or hereafter agreed to by this Company, in writing to be added to or endorsed upon this Policy, then, and from thence forth so long as the same shall be so appropriated, applied or used, these presents shall cease, and be of no force or effect. And it is moreover declared, that this insurance is not intended to apply to or cover any books of accounts, written securities, deeds or other evidences of title to lands, nor to bonds, bills, notes, or other evidences of debt, nor to money or bullion. And that this Policy is made and accepted in reference to the proposals and conditions hereunto annexed, which are to be used and resorted to, in order to explain the rights and obligations of the parties hereto, in all cases, not herein otherwise specially provided for.

This Insurance [the risk not being changed] may be continued for such further term as shall be agreed on; the premium therefor being paid and endorsed on this Policy, or a receipt given for the same.

The interest of the insured in this Policy is not assignable, unless by consent of this Company manifested in writing; and in case of any transfer or termination of the interest of the insured, either by sale or otherwise, without such consent, this Policy shall from thenceforth be void and of no effect.

In witness whereof, the Southern Mutual Insurance Company have caused these presents to be signed by their President, and attested by their Secretary; but the same shall not be binding until countersigned by R.S. Lancey Agent of this Company at Macon, Ga.

Attested,

Countersigned at Macon this fourth day of January in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and fifty.

R.S. Lancey Agent.

INVENTORY OF FURNITURE IN THE VARNER HOUSE

Following is the inventory of the furniture of Henry Dillon in the Varner House, taken in 1850, presumably sold to Edward Varner.

No. Room	21	13 mattresses	3.50	45.50
		6 Chairs	.60	3.60
		3 small tables	.75	2.25
		1 Bed Stid		1.50
		1 Window Curtain		.25
" "	22	31 Feather pillows	.75	23.25
		5 Bolsters	1.25	6.25
		10 Single Mattresses	3.00	30.00
		8 Single Osnaburgs	1.00	8.00
		10 DO Cotton & Shucks	3.50	35.00
		7 Do Do	1.50	10.50
		10 Do Double	4.50	45.00
		1 Bed Stid		1.50
		2 Dressing Tables		1.75
		1 Chair		.60
" "	23	38 Fether pillars [sic]	.75	28.50
		9 Bolsters	1.25	11.25
		2 Wash Stands	1.00	2.00
		2 Tables (dressing)	.75	1.50
		10 Mattresses	3.50	35.00
		9 Do Osnaburgs	1.00	9.00
		1 Doz. Looking Glasses		4.00
		11 C C Chambers	.15	1.65
		2 Doz. Ewers & Basins	5.00	10.00
		1 Windsor Chair		.38
		2 Slop Bucketts	.50	1.00
" "	24	14 Pillars	.75	10.50
		2 Bolsters	1.25	2.50
		20 Mattresses	4.00	80.00
		1 Dressing Table		.75
		2 Bed Stid	1.00	2.00
		4 Chairs	.60	2.40
		2 Window Curtains	.25	.50
" "	25	3 Tables for		2.00
		1 Bed Stid		1.50
		10 Chairs	.60	6.00
		and over		<u>\$427.38</u>

				Amt Brot Forward	\$427.38
No. Room	26	2 Bed Stids		.75	1.50
" "	27	2 Do Do		.75	1.50
" "	28	2 Do Do 1/1.00 1/1.50			2.50
		2 Dressing Tables for	1.25		
		1 Window Curtain			.13
		1 Chair			.60
" "	29	5 dressing Tables	.50		2.50
		1 Wash Stand			.50
		1 Bed Stid			1.50
		8 Chairs	.50		4.00
" "	30	2 Bed Stids	1.00		2.00
" "	31	2 Do Do	1.00		2.00
" "	32	1 Bed Stid			1.25
" "	33	2 " "	1.25		2.50
		1 Chair			.50
" "	34	1 Bed Stid			1.00
		2 Chairs	.60		1.20
		1 Tub			.50
" "	35	2 Bed Stids	1.00		2.00
		3 Chairs for			1.25
		1 Dressing Table			.38
" "	36	2 Bed Stids 1/1.00 1/1.25			2.25
		3 Chairs	.50		1.50
		2 Tables 1/.50 1/.75			1.25
" "	37	2 Bed Stids	1.25		2.50
		2 Chairs	.50		1.00
		1 Table			.75
		2 Window Curtains	.12		.25
" "	38	1 Bed Stid			1.00
		3 Chairs	.50		1.50
" "	39 & 40	3 Stids	1.25		3.75
		2 Chairs	.60		1.20
		1 Tub			.37
		Lipman Ringe			
		2 Bed Stids	.75		1.50
		1 Stid & Chair for			1.13
					<u>\$478.00</u>
		Amt Over			
		Amt Brot forward			\$478.00

No. Room 39 & 40			1 Window Curtain		.13
			3 Bed Stids	for	2.00
			2 Bed Stids		1.00 2.00
			1 Bed Stid		1.00
			3 Bed Stids		1.00 3.00
			3 Bed Stids	for	2.50
			1 Dressing Table		.50
			3 Bed Stids		1.00 3.00
			1 Table		.50
			1 Table		.25
			3 Bed Stids		1.00 3.00
			3 Bed Stids		1.00 3.00
			2 Tables	1/1.00 1/.	.25 1.25
			1 Table		.50
			1 Chair		.50
			3 Bed Stids		1.00 3.00
			Up Stairs		
			1 Lot Benches	for	3.50
			6 Candle Holders		.15 .75
			1 Dressing Table		.50
"	"	3	13 Chairs	for	7.00
			1 Table & Glass	for	.75
			3 Mattresses	for	8.00
			1 Bed Stid		.75
			1 Bowl		.12
"	"	4	3 Mattresses		3.50 10.50
			1 Bed Stid		.50
			2 Pillars	.75	1.50
			1 Glass		.25
			1 Chair		.60
			1 Window Curtain		.25
"	"	6	5 Mattresses		3.50 17.50
			4 Pillars	.75	3.00
			3 Chairs	.60	1.80
			1 Dressing Table		.50
			1 Trundle Bed Stid		.75
					<u>\$562.65</u>
			OVER		
			Amt. Brot forward		\$562.65
"	"	8	5 Mattresses		4.00 20.00
			1 Glass		1.25
			1 Table		.50
			1 Wash Stand		.50
			4 Split Chairs	.50	2.00
			1 Stool Chair		.50
			2 Bed Stids for		5.00
			1 Curtain		.25
			1 Bolster		1.25
			1 Pillar		.75
			1 C.C. Chamber		.40

No. Room	15	1 Bed Stid		1.00
		1 Straw Mattress		1.00
		1 Table		.75
		2 Chairs	.60	1.20
		3 Window Curtains	.20	.60
"	"	16	3 Mattresses for	7.00
		1 Pillar		.50
		1 Bed Stid		2.00
		2 Tables	.50	1.00
"	"	9	2 Pillars	.75 1.50
		2 Pillars	.75	1.50
		2 Mattresses	3.50	7.00
		1 Bed Stid		.75
		1 Chamber		.13
		1 Looking Glass		1.25
		1 Table		.25
		1 Window Curtain		.25
		1 And Irons		.25
		2 Chairs for		.60
"	"	10	1 Mattress	3.50
		1 Stid		.50
		2 Chairs	.50	1.00
		1 Window Curtain		.25
		6 Bench Spreds	.75	4.50
		" "		
				.75
				<u>\$634.08</u>
		Amt Brot forward		\$634.08
"	"	14	1 Fiddler's Stand	1.00
		2 Bed Stids	.75	1.50
		2 Mattresses	2.50	5.00
		1 Straw Mattress		1.00
		2 Pillars	.75	1.50
		3 Chairs for		1.00
		1 Table		.50
"	"	13	1 Mattress	3.00
		2 Pillars	.62	1.25
		1 Table		.30
		3 Chairs for		1.25
		1 Ewer & Basin		.50
		1 Window Curtain		.75
		1 Bed Stid		
		1 Tavern Bell		6.00
	Lipman's	4 Mattresses	2.50	10.00
		4 Pillars	.75	3.00
		2 pr. sheets	1.50	3.00

No. Room	1 Dimity spread	1.50	
	1 Quilt	1.50	
	8 Blankets	.75	6.00
	1 Spread		.10
	2 Bed Stids 1/1.50 1/.75		2.25
	1 Dressing Table		
	1 Ewer & Basin for		1.25

Lipman's
Store

11 Chairs for		4.50
94 Chairs (dining room)	.50	47.00
2 Solar Lamps	3.00	6.00
1 Centre Table & Cover for		18.00
10 Flag Chairs for		8.00
1 Flag Sofa		12.00
1 " "		6.00
4 Picturs [sic] & Frames	4.00	16.00
1 Carpet & Rug for		18.00
1 Settee		2.50
12 Dining Tables	1.50	18.00
1 8 Day Clock		10.00
		<u>\$854.48</u>

Amt Brot forward \$854.48

3 Bed Stids	1.25	3.75
2 Mattresses	2.50	5.00
1 Trundle Bed Stid		1.00
3 Window Curtains	1.00	3.00
1 Wash Stand		.50
3 Parlor Curtains	3.00	9.00
1 Window Curtain		.13
1 Berau [bureau]		4.00
3 Window Curtains for		1.00
1 Slab		.75
1 Lot Knives & Forks		4.00
1 Do " Spoons		.50
Lamps Sugar Casters		6.00
Lot Sugar Casters Pantry Room		4.00
Lot " " " " dishes		1.00
Castors & Salt		1.25
39 Window Curtains	.15	5.85
1 pr Do		.15
63 Sheets	.60	37.80
5 Sheets	.60	3.00
16 Bed Spreds	1.50	24.00
3 Counterpins	2.00	6.00
5 Calico Spreds	.50	2.50
Foot Valances for		.50
Lot Table & Tea Spoons for		3.00
1 Table		1.00
2 Benches in kitchen	.50	1.00
5 Sheet Iron Pans		5.00
Lot Coffee Urns for		5.00

No. Room	1 Muffin Baker		.50
	Lot Pots & Ovens		15.00
	1 Dining Room Table		1.50
	1 Doz. Soup Plates		1.50
	8 Baking Pans	.12	1.00
	Saucer Stak Sugar &		
	3 Large Dishes for		6.50
			<u>\$1020.16</u>
	Amt Brot forward		\$1020.16
	Salt Sellars & Cups & Saucers		1.50
	Baking pans for		.75
	Dishes plats [sic] cups & saucers		
	and sugar dishes casters &		
	Dishes for		9.00
	2 Pitchers Stake dish tops & for		3.00
	Lot Tumblers for		1.25
	2 Dish Covers		3.00
	Lot Candl Sticks		3.50
	Bowl & Pitcher		.75
	1 Looking Glass		.75
	Curcular Table		.75
	2 Large Benches	1.25	2.50
	2 Dressing Tables	.75	1.50
	3 painted Benches	.50	1.50
			<u>\$1062.41</u>

Rec^d two notes of Four Hundred & Fifty dollars each in pay^t of the
above bill of articles.

27 June 1850

Henry Dillon
by Ag^t J.M. Burney

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE WRITTEN ABOUT "OLD VARNER PLACE"

The following appeared in the Macon Telegraph in 1926, concerning the Indian Springs Hotel and the Varner House.

Indian Springs House Is Noted

—

Georgia's Great Entertained at Old Varner Place

—

Miss Jo Political Power

—

By Hazel Gewinner

The old Varner House—Miss Joe, Alexander Stephens, William Yancey, Robert Toombs, Ben Hill, The Cobbs—the figure that is outlined sharply against the dark background of the days of Georgia's land treaties with the Creek Indians, General William McIntosh, Henry Lamar. These and others of Georgia's greatest during the century that is past are pieced, like bright bits into a patchwork quilt of colorful pattern, by the old Varner House at Indian Springs.

Today it stands a little back from the road surrounded by ancient trees, arresting the attention of travelers with the look that speaks as plainly as words and says, 'Here is a story of other days. Laughter has floated through my corridors. From my windows, that stare blank and cold now, have looked the fairest and the loveliest women this land has ever known. Through my doors have passed those whom Georgia cradled to make her great. Stop and you shall hear.'

When Cotton was king in Georgia the planters and their families gathered in the Fall of the year at the Lanier House in Macon for a ball of such splendor that the diamonds worn by the women, diamonds set in silver, would have filled a peck measure from all the rich cotton-growing counties they came, particularly from Twiggs and Wilkinson, where there was greater wealth than in any other part of the State. After the brilliant ball in Macon, they traveled by state coach or in their carriages, or on horseback, to Indian Springs for a round of dances and gaities, at the Varner House.

It was not the old Varner House in those days. It was a building of imposing structure with a great ball room on one side, quarters for hundreds of slaves in the rear, stables for blooded horses, gardens of rare beauty, and winding paths, lover's lanes, leading to the Spring famous with red and white man alike for the medicinal value of its crystal water.

Cotillion Popular

The cotillion, waltz and schottische were danced by the woman in brocaded velvet gowns and rustling silks, and men in stock collars, the chivalry of the Old South in their looks and manners. The names of the negro string band that played for these dances have come down to the present time as makers of such music that never will they be forgotten. Jonnie Butler was the fiddler. Bill Brown played the clarinet, Bell Brown played the bass fiddle. Through the throng of beautiful women and courtly men threaded the negro slaves bearing huge silver trays heaped with refreshment for the dancers. Brave days they were in Georgia's history, days of splendor and of plenty.

Barbecues were held which lasted all day long. To these festivities the entire countryside came, in courtly equipages such as the popular victoria was in those days, in wagons, on horseback, in carts, afoot. The barbecues were really political meetings of great import. Candidates declared themselves and outlined their purposes under the ancient trees that surround the old house. No doubt Alexander Stephens himself spoke there for his name is found in the old hotel register that is still kept in the office of the Varner House. Perhaps he asked for the support of Miss Jo, who was a political power in the state, one whose influence was sought by great and small alike. At this house were held many of the secret political meetings which decided debatable questions 'without benefit of primaries.' In the Atlanta Journal for June 14, 1914, Miss Jo is called, The Mayou[sic] and Council of Indian Springs. Many, many years before Col. Van McKibben, the father of Mrs. Andrew Lane of Macon, called her the 'Ben Hill of Butts.' By this name she was widely known over the state.

Georgia's Most Popular Woman

Large, dark-eyed, handsome, are words used by those who knew her in the days of her youth to describe this woman who is nearing her ninetieth birthday. The most popular woman in Georgia in her young days she was termed by others. She is a member of the famous Hardwick family of Georgia whose history is traced in the volume, Notable Southern Families, by Zelia Armstrong. She went to live at the Varner House when she was ten years old and is making her home there today.

Seated in a rocking chair with a straight back she brings to mind, somehow, Whistler's picture of his mother. She receives her visitors with a gracious friendliness and treats

them as if they were all children, as indeed they are, to this lady of four score and ten.

'So warm a welcome did Miss Jo gave my father whenever he arrived at her home,' said Judge Bridges Smith in speaking of her, 'that he always said a visit to her was like a visit to a near and a dear relative.'

Of her home Miss Jo said, 'It took two years to build this house. A man named Hitchcock built the chimneys. All the doors and windows were chiseled with a pocket knife. It was built by General William McIntosh for a hostelry. He was own cousin to Governor Troup. I went once to the McIntosh home on the Chattahoochee River to visit the family of Chilly McIntosh, the son of William McIntosh. I remember stone steps going up to big boulders that General McIntosh had had fashioned for his children so that they could easily mount their ponies.'

Treaty Signed at Home

At the Varner House was signed the treaty on Feb. 7, 1825, which William McIntosh paid for with his life. Under this treaty all Indian possessions in Georgia were ceded to the whites, and an early removal of the tribes to lands equal in fertility was arranged for. The niche in the walls where this treaty was signed is pointed out to visitors today.

The Indians of both Upper and Lower Creeks were gathered about the Varner House when the treaty was concluded between the United States Commissioners and the Indian chiefs. The large rock at the South end of the house remains today where on that day of Feb. 7, 1825, when Hopoethleyoholo, a chief hostile to McIntosh, mounted it and stirred the Indians to frenzy with his denunciations of McIntosh and his friends. The rock is known by the name of the McIntosh Rock and is preserved as a memorial by the Piedmont Continental Chapter D.A.R. of Atlanta, marked by them with a handsome bronze tablet.

In March, 1916, the old Varner House was given to the William McIntosh Chapter D.A.R. of Jackson, Ga., by Miss Jo. The home is to be known as the Varner-McIntosh Memorial. It was dedicated on June 14. In a wine room of the house is a museum of Indian relics, among them a peace pipe found on the place.

Preserving in the memories the pattern of great names and brave deeds the old Varner House will ever be, as is its venerable mistress, dear to those who hold in their hearts a love for the colorful days of Georgia's history during the past century. It has been preserved beyond the shadow of a doubt, to become a shrine where pilgrimages may be made by those who burn with love for the 'red old hills'. Long live the old Varner House at Indian Springs.

LETTER TO MISS JOE VARNER FROM H.J. LAMAR

The following letter was written to Miss Joe Varner by H.J. Lamar, Jr., concerning the renovation of the Varner House, dated March 23, 1882, from Macon, Georgia.

H.J. Lamar,

J.W. Rankin

H.J. Lamar, Jr.

Office of
Lamar, Rankin & Lamar.
 Wholesale and Retail Druggists.
 102 & 104 Cherry Street.
 Macon, Ga.
 Proprietors of Brewers Lung Restorer

Macon, Ga., March 23rd, 1882

Dear Miss Joe

I would give my house two good coats of paint- I will send up some paint for your inside two colors, so you can paint the inside of your rooms.

I think that it would be a good idea to make more rooms out of your ball room. Go in at the door fronting your room and have a hall six foot wide run the hall half the width from the door and then turn and have a hall thorough [through] the center of the ball room, which would give you six more bed rooms with the two you now have in the house eighth [eight] good rooms, fix them good & nice. It would be cheaper and better to plaster the hall & rooms, have ventilation over each door. I am anxious you to fix up, so you can attract customers certainly will pay you and do not be frightened at the expense. Let me know about your blinds and I will find out what they will cost you

Yours truly
 H.J. Lamar

A BRIEF SKETCH OF INDIAN SPRINGS

The following was probably written in the 1920s. The original is located in the Varner Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF INDIAN SPRINGS, GEORGIA,
A GREAT HEALTH RESORT.

For further information address W B Powell,
Indian Springs, Ga., or hotels.

More than 100 years ago the spring at Indian Springs was discovered by an intrepid hunter who, to escape the Indians, buried himself among the high weeds and rocks. Thus seeking cover he found the spring, but did not tarry long for the Indians knew of the place before him. He finally made his escape and told of the clear water that trickled from the side of a giant rock, low down in the coolness of a ravine. Early in 1800 General McIntosh, a half breed and cousin of Governor Troup built a cabin at the Springs near the 'Healing Waters', as the spring was known by the Indians. A small corn mill was erected on Big Sandy where now stands one of the last water-power driven mills of the South. Not until 1821, when a treaty was signed with the Indians, were other improvements made.

For more than 100 years Indian Springs has been a Mecca for thousands and tens of thousands who sought the health giving waters. It is estimated that more than 200,000 people have the [sic] visited the Springs, partook of Nature's remedy, and returned to their homes in health. This is no idle statement. The evidence is all over the state and the South, and at the Springs on cots, on crutches, in wheel chairs and in a few weeks are able to walk and enjoy life to the fullness thereof. Weak, emaciated men, have told me they gained a pound a day during their stay. I have seen men come in the agonies of rheumatism and neuritis and shattered nerves, who, in two weeks were relieved, if not cured.

The temperature of the water remains the same the year round--about 69 degrees Fahr.,--specific gravity 1.142 against distilled water at 1.000.

GASES--Azotic gas 0.156; carbonic acid gas 1.000; sulphurated gas (hydrogen) 3.005--total 4.161 cubic inches.

SALINE CONTENTS--carbonate of magnesia 1.982; sulphate of lime 7.152; sulphate of potash 3.415--total saline contents 84.077 grains.

Diseases peculiar to females who lead a sedentary life, paralytical attacks, malaria infested; stomach, liver and kidney troubles, skin diseases, headaches, nervous troubles, etc., as well as rheumatism and neuritis find relief and respond to the use of the water. The water posses [sic] diuretic, diaphoretic, cathartic, alternative and tonic properties. It is pleasant to drink--and you can drink of it freely, for it is very light and palatable.

HOW TO REACH THE SPRINGS--By Souther [sic] Railroad to Flovilla or Jackson, where taxis will carry you to springs. By auto route No 42. Indian Springs is located midway between Atlanta and Macon. From Macon you turn north at Sylvester from off Dixie Highway. From Atlanta you travel out of city on South Pryor street. Good roads carry you to the Springs from Griffin, Covington and Monticello.

HOTELS--Hotel Elder, The Foy, Mrs Bessie Bryans, Arnold House, and lesser boarding and rooming houses. Rates from \$1 to \$5 the day, American plan.

ATTRACTIONS--At the springs is a casino with billiards, bowling alley, sulphur baths, refreshments, barber shop, and other accommodations. A large swimming pool using filtered water is popular. Near by is Watkins' Park and Pool.

There are excellent motor roads, and wonderful walks through the wildwood, up hill and down dale, with a riot of flowers and greenery. Two creeks through the town afford best sanitary needs.

We could refer by permission to hundreds of promonent [sic] people who have been cured by using Indian Spring water, but refrain as it entails too much correspondence on their part answering the skeptical. We ask you to come and see for yourself. Meet the people here who will attest to what the water has done for them. It seems unbelievable, but they will tell you the truth and truth is stanger [sic] than fiction. Leave your medicine bottles at home and come and take Nature's own treatment--a God-given flow of medicinal water that have [sic] proved efficient to white man for over 100 years.

APPENDIX B

Accounts of Political Gatherings

YOUNG MEN'S DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION HELD AT INDIAN SPRINGS

The following article appeared in The Federal Union, Milledgeville, July 30, 1844, concerning a convention held at Indian Springs.

The Young Men's Democratic Convention
at the Indian Springs

It was not in our power to procure the minutes of the proceedings of this great meeting; but as we were present, and make our report from personal observation, we trust we shall be able to make it acceptable to our friends.

On the evening of Wednesday, the 24th inst. the gathering of the people began to take place, and it was soon obvious that a great meeting was at hand. Every corner in which an individual could be placed, was occupied, and a large number were left to shift as they could. A great many tents were erected in the surrounding hills and the night passed off with anticipations the most agreeable. Early in the morning of Thursday, the crowd seemed to be gathering in, and by nine o'clock, three or four thousand persons were on the ground; by midday the number had increased to five thousand.

The business of the meeting being the interchange of ideas and opinions, arrangements were made for the hearing of public speakers. The people were addressed at the Indian Spring Hotel at 9 o'clock by the Hon. Howel [sic] Cobb, in a strain of fluent eloquence rarely equalled. The reception it met was animating in the highest degree, and fully prepared the audience for the enjoyment of the able efforts which were to follow. He was followed by H.V. Johnson, Esq., who for about an hour and a half, held the vast multitude in deep silence and attentive scrutiny of a speech worthy of all praise. Few speeches have ever been delivered to so large an audience, with such universal approbation - all concurred in the opinion that he went beyond the reputation he had before acquired and fully entitled himself to a place amongst our most talented and eloquent speakers.

Col. David C. Campbell of Bibb, who had been selected as President of the day by the committee of arrangements; then announced the names of the several Vice Presidents, who had been appointed and requested each to assemble with the delegates of his county to form a procession, and proceed to the stand which had been erected near the Mountain Spout Spring. In conformity with this request, the multitude assembled at

the stand, accompanied by several hundred ladies, who by their presence, gave zest and animation to the scene.

The President then introduced to the audience the Hon. Hiram Warner, who for about an hour, poured forth an unbroken argument, which it will be hard, if not impossible to answer. He spoke to the understanding, and we have understood that several who had not made up their minds were confirmed for Polk and Dallas.

Next followed Mr. Samford, of Meriwether. The fatigue of the audience, which had now listened for several hours to other speakers, did not hinder the fine effect of his short address. He filled up the short time which was allowed with a brilliant and animated address, which was closed, that dinner might be announced. He was peculiarly happy in his allusion to Mr. O'Connell. When urged by the multitude to go on, 'Not for me, but for the zeal you have in the cause, do you say go on.' He concluded with a few pertinent remarks.

The meeting now adjourned and partook of the barbacue [sic], which was prepared for the occasion.

After a recess of about two hours, the people again assembled, and were addressed by Hon. Wm. H. Stiles, in his accustomed, beautiful and finished style. Able, eloquent and sarcastic, he left on the minds of his hearers impressions not to be forgotten.

The Hon. Walter T. Colquitt, was next introduced. Much was expected of him, for this is his chosen field. He came after many and able speakers, who had, it may well be said, exhausted many topics. But he knew his place and his powers - there was ground and time enough for him, and although he held on for two hours or longer, there was no evidence in the audience of fatigue or impatience. Being by these circumstances loosed from the necessity of the argument he was left to handle the particular claims of the candidates before the people. And if the meeting has left on our mind a thing to be regretted, it is that his account of the character and pretensions of Mr. Clay, could not have been heard by every voter in the State. His vivid picture of Mr. Clay's morals, political associations, and deadly hostility to Southern interests, can hardly be surpassed. Nor was he less happy in the account he gave of the character and claims of James K. Polk, our own candidate. A character so elevated, so pure, and so unblemished, could scarcely have been conceived. Only think of the venom, the recklessness, and the slanderous tongues of the whigs, not having a spot on which to fix their blackening pencils. The toryism of his grand father, is their only target, and this may be true or false. His father and his uncles are recorded as whigs of the first water. They were the first signers of the

first Declaration of Independence in the United States, and acted in conformity with this through the war. Mr. Polk is therefore of good revolutionary whig blood. What was Mr. Clay's father? And had he any Grand Father? Consult Mr. Clay's life on these questions.

The evening being far advanced, the President arose to adjourn the meeting, but calls for Gen. Harralson, caused him to defer it. He accordingly made his appearance and for a time delivered an animating and fervent close to the arguments of the day. He declined to continue the discussion, for the time of the audience had been heavily taxed.

Previous to the adjournment, a proposition was made to hold a Mass Meeting of the Democratic party at Macon, on the last Thursday in August. It was carried by acclamation.

The meeting now adjourned with the understanding that the discussion would be continued at the Indian Spring Hotel, at 7 o'clock P.M.

Evening Discussion.

The Hon. Marshall J. Wellborn of Columbus, addressed the audience, which had scarcely been lessened by the adjournment. It is known to our readers that this gentleman has long been a distinguished member of the Whig party. He is also a distinguished jurist, and by all acknowledged to be an exemplary man and good citizen. His convictions are the result of cool judgment, and his separation from his party, a subject of deep regret. Such a witness for our cause is invaluable. He spoke in great good feeling but with arguments strong and conclusive. He, with great modesty desired to close earlier, but the crowd demanded of him to go on. And he did go on, for about two hours and a half. Never did we hear a clearer or stronger argument. There were many whigs present, and some we have understood, acknowledged that his arguments were irresistible. The general impression produced, was as strong as we have ever witnessed.

The time had now grown so late that other speakers though called for, either declined altogether, or spoke only a few words. We may mention the names of Mr. Howard, of Crawford, Mr. Samford, Mr. Johnson, of Muscogee, and if there were others, we did not remain to hear them.

We have thus brought to a close our narrative of the proceedings at this great meeting. Great we call it - not because of the extent of the accommodations, or the number of persons present - but because of the spirit which animated the bosoms of all who had at heart the success of the Democratic cause. The success of our cause in Georgia, is no longer doubtful. The accounts we received from all quarters forbid us to doubt it. The facts we witnessed equally forbid it. We cannot be divided

- we are an increasing and irresistable phalanx. The spirit which animated this meeting could not be satisfied. The want of more room, more power to accommodate a multitude was severely felt. The meeting was made smaller by these difficulties at the Spring. The voice of all demanded an opportunity for a meeting in one of our cities. - They have accordingly appointed a Meeting in Macon on the last Thursday in August, at which, we are assured all who go will find suitable accommodations. Here we hope to meet our friends in a mass meeting, worthy of our cause; and equal to the feelings which animate every democrat.

DINNER HELD AT INDIAN SPRINGS

The following article appeared in The Federal Union, Milledgeville, Georgia, on September 8, 1840.

Dinner at the Indian Springs.

A great meeting of the people was held on the 2d inst. at the Indian Springs. We were present, and make our statements from actual observation.

When the meeting which was held at Milledgeville on the 4th of July, was determined on, it was not doubted that Congress would have adjourned in sufficient time to allow of the presence of our members. Being disappointed in this, and feeling the necessity of a closer intercourse between ourselves and our Representatives, and especially desiring that in the present position of the Democratic party in regard to three of our Delegates, Messrs. Colquitt, Cooper and Black, they might have an opportunity of being heard before the people and judged of, after a full and free interchange of opinion, it was determined to offer them a public entertainment on the day above mentioned. The great concourse which had attended the Convention at Macon, and the accounts promulgated of their proceedings, together with the stories of the strange banners they bore, and the cry of change, change, change, which had been heard in connection with these unaccountable insignia, had awakened amongst the hard-handed, bread-earning Van Buren men of the country, a sense of the danger threatening the institutions under which the people of this happy land have flourished for more than half a century. They were aroused from their lethargy, and determined, that for once they would suspend their accustomed pursuits of industry, and meet with the talented men they had selected to represent them in Congress, and such others as might attend this great meeting, and there see, hear, and judge for themselves. It was ascertained that the accommodations which could be afforded by a small village like that at the Indian Springs, would not afford shelter for so large a multitude as would there assemble. The people therefore provided themselves with all the necessaries they would require. They carried with them tents and provisions, so that there was no danger of the want of shelter or of food.

For many days before the 2d instant, the gathering of the people at the Springs might be seen. The extensive houses of

accommodation were soon filled to overflowing. But soon the baggage trains were seen arriving from all directions. Tents were seen arising on every convenient spot.

On Monday, the crowd which had assembled became so great, that an impatience to hear discussed the topics which had given rise to the meeting, was manifested. About 10 o'clock, A.M., an assemblage of several hundred gentlemen, and forty or fifty ladies, was formed at the Springs. Here orations were delivered by Col. A.B. Powers, and Mr. O'Keif, of Bibb. The first of these gentlemen referred at length to the principal points on which the whole of the discussions were to turn; the second, gave an appeal of great eloquence, and stood forth the champion of that blood which has flown from the Green Isle of Erin, through thousands of mingling channels in our country.

On Tuesday, the assemblage had become a multitude. The orations commenced in the piazza of Mr. Dillon's Hotel. Messrs. Steiner and Harris, of Alabama, held forth in able addresses, and fairly lit up the flame of intellectual developement [sic] which formed the business and the pleasure of the meeting during the succeeding three days. In the evening of this day, Mr. Yancey of the same State, delivered a very able and eloquent address to a vast concourse of hearers. Two of these gentlemen, Messrs. Yancey and Harris, are native Georgians. They were thrice welcome amongst their old friends. Georgia has reason to be proud of such sons. They are yet very young, but shew to the best advantage the talents and spirit of the South. By this time night had come on, and the collections of persons in all directions were sending in petitions for orators. They were addressed at the Hotel; they were addressed at the Church; they were addressed at their encampments on each side of the creek; and almost on every hill for a great distance around the Spring. It is not in our power to state the number or names of the speakers.

On Wednesday morning, the multitude had thickened and spread till the eye could no longer extend to its confines. The unevenness of the ground and the greatness of the number rendered it impossible to see all at any view. But they were present in hundreds and thousands. The citizens of Butts county were nearly all present. Monroe was represented by her six hundred; Henry by her four hundred; Jones by her two hundred; Bibb by her three hundred; Jasper by her three hundred; and Walton by her three hundred. These led the way in this glorious rivalry; but many were the citizens to be added to this list from counties far and near. Our newly peopled Cherokee counties were there by their hundreds, and hardly a county in the State was without its representative in this great assemblage.

We were pleased to notice some of the best talent of our growing and important neighbor, the State of Alabama, mingling

with the crowd and contributing a full share of the intellectual fire which shone with such splendor throughout the whole proceeding. Every one will ask what number of men could have assembled on such an occasion. We were not unmindful of this question, and took some pains to satisfy ourselves. Tellers were stationed on the way of the procession which was formed. They enumerated six thousand and finding the disorder in the ranks too great to admit of this mode of numbering, they abandoned it in despair.

They could not have enumerated much more than the half of the people who were on the ground. The whole number could not have been short of 10,000. Those who attended were principally Van Buren men, and there were very few boys.

On Monday the Committee of Arrangements felt seriously apprehensive that their preparation for the entertainment for eight thousand persons would fall short of the wants of the multitude. They therefore enlarged their preparations to suit the exigency.

Dinner was provided for almost any number. Ten thousand pounds of meats we understand, formed one item in the bill of fare; but the tables were sufficient only for the accommodation of four or five thousand at one time. The people therefore are in succession; all the tables have been repeatedly filled.

The entertainment was spread on forty or fifty tables standing as radii to a common centre, in which there was erected a stand for such orators as might be called out by the people. They covered about two acres of ground. His Excellency the Governor was called on to act as President, and sixty-two Vice Presidents were appointed to assist him.

Major Darden, of Butts, aided by ten or twelve assistants, performed the duties of Marshals of the day. Under their direction, several Revolutionary Soldiers, and about five hundred ladies, were placed in convenient situations at the festive board. In this truly Democratic style, and under this organization, this vast multitude partook with that order and decency which we trust will ever be the attributes of Democracy. Nor shall we fail to do them justice in another particular. The world never saw a more sober and orderly people gathered together. Truly there was no lack of spirit to produce intoxication; but it was held in abhorrence by many, and not used in excess by one in a thousand. The use of it formed no part of the proceedings, and the abuse of it was hardly seen at all.

This vast multitude had not gathered together to eat or to drink. They came to the feast of reason. They came to banquet on that which is food for the understanding, and they were not disappointed. Our Senator in Congress, the Hon. Alfred

Cuthbert, was first called on and delivered a splendid, animated and eloquent address which touched as if with holy fire the hearts of his hearers. Gov. Lumpkin was next called, but declined at that time from hoarseness, probably produced by having previously addressed the people. The people next demanded the voice of our talented representative, Walter T. Colquitt. At the mention of this name an inspiration seemed to spread through the multitude. The air was rent with their shouts and vociferations which were continued till he had taken his position on the stand. Their expectations were not disappointed. For three hours did this extraordinary speaker hold in order this great audience. They were not fatigued or impatient, for they felt that all he said was to the purpose, and that every subject he touched was elucidated. If he was great in the defence of his own position, he was terrible when provoked to deal out an assault on another. The Hon. Mark A. Cooper was next demanded by the audience. They had already listened to orations which had lasted for about four hours. Their anxiety to have their minds enlightened may be judged of when it is told that at the request of Mr. Cooper, they quietly took their seats and with the strictest attention, listened to his long and argumentative address. His arguments were unanswerable, and we have no doubt carried conviction to the minds of every one of his hearers. The close of this address brought a very late hour and the company adjourned.

During the delivery of Mr. Colquitt's address, it became apparent that so vast a multitude could not hear even the loud and clear voice of this orator. A motion was therefore made that Col. Jones of Muscogee should repair to another stand and there address the people. This was accordingly done, and the thousands who followed him were equally delighted with his very able and eloquent address.

This great entertainment was now drawing to a close. The people withdrew from the dinner tables, but it was soon seen that assemblages were forming in several places where they were addressed by orators who had not yet been heard. Speaking and hearing was the order of the day, and hearing and speaking the order of the night.

It is impossible for us to do justice to the many efforts which were made, or the real eloquence which was displayed from time to time during the continuance of this meeting. We are by no means certain that we have even the names of all who delivered addresses to the people. We will mention such as came to our knowledge.

The Hon. Alfred Cuthbert and Ex. Governor Lumpkin - our Senators in Congress; the Hon. Walter T. Colquitt and Mark a [sic] Cooper - two of our Representatives. The Hon. Edward J. Black, who was also expected, was unavoidably absent. To these we may

add the names of Col. Seaborn Jones, Col. Henry G. Lamar, Maj. John H. Howard, Gen. H.A. Haralson, Gen. L.L. Griffin, Robert W. Pooler, Esq., John Millon, Esq., Gen. Thomas Glascock, Col. D.C. Campbell, John Lamar, Esq., Col. David J. Bailey, James H. Stark, Esq., Doctor Joel Branham, Mr. Irwin, Upton H. Heath, Esq., A.B. Powers, Esq., and Mr. O'Keif. To these we may add our talented visitors from Alabama, Messrs. Steiner, Harris and Yancey.

We avoid the invidious task of entering into the particular merits of the orators whom we have named. We boldly challenge any party to produce a greater array of talent or character. To appreciate their merits they should be heard; and we are proud to say they were heard by thousands in whose hearts they have inspired a confidence not to be shaken - an energy not to be conquered.

Such is the faint outline we give of the DINNER AT THE INDIAN SPRINGS. We feel that we have fallen far short of the realities of the exhibition. We cannot transmit the impression made on our minds by the vast ocean of teeming life and moving intelligence which we have for three days had before us. It cannot be realized by one who did not witness it. The hills were covered, the roads were filled, the houses crowded and the valleys thronged. Men, horses, oxen and mules, carriages of all descriptions and all without the exhibition of the angry passions. A crowd without fiction, a multitude subdued to order by their love of decorum, and all animated by a single purpose. It was a vast, a sublime spectacle, a boundless ocean of life, animated by the highest feeling of patriotic devotion - 'all were fired with one feeling - victory was on every tongue.'

APPENDIX C

Mineral Spring Hotels: 1820-1920

MINERAL SPRING HOTELS: 1820-1920

During the 100 years between 1820 and 1920, over 170 mineral springs were located in Georgia. Of these, only a few came to be considered as notable "watering places" or resorts, offering bed and board to their visitors. Following is a listing of those located in the course of this research on the Indian Springs Hotel. This list may not include every resort that existed during this century. It is drawn only from information found while researching the history of the Indian Springs Hotel, rather than through a direct effort to locate and describe the mineral resorts of Georgia. It is based on travel accounts, newspaper articles, advertisements, a 1913 Geological Survey, the Varner Collection and other private papers.

Newspaper items are primarily from The Georgia Messenger of Macon, The Macon Telegraph, The Federal Union of Milledgeville, The Southern Recorder of Milledgeville, and The Savannah Georgian. Further research using other newspapers of the state, particularly from the late-19th Century, could yield additional entries. Such extensive research was not possible within the scope of this paper. However, since four newspapers have been searched extensively for the period 1820-1870, and since the Geological Survey adequately covers the 1870-1920 period, along with the other sources mentioned, this list is believed to include the 37 most widely-known springs with hotels. Only one of the ante-bellum hotels is known by this author to be standing, that being the Indian Springs Hotel. Few have survived from the late-19th and early-20th Century. The only ones from that period that this author is aware of are the Elder House at

Indian Springs, the Omaha Springs Hotel in Jefferson County and Rock Castle at Indian Springs.

1. Adams Spring, Habersham County. Near Lake Demorest. Hotel, date unknown.
2. Argon Springs, Taliaferro County. Hotel and cottages built mid-19th Century. Burned and not rebuilt.
3. Beall Springs, Warren County. Eight miles southwest of Warrenton. Some improvements in the mid-19th Century. Hotel built just before 1900. Still standing in 1913.
4. Cascade Springs, Fulton County. Six miles southwest of Atlanta. Hotel, stone spring house and cottages. No longer standing.
5. Catoosa Springs, Catoosa County. Three-story hotel built ca. 1850. Dining room, cottages, billiards, bowling, bath houses. Hotel replaced late-19th Century. Burned by 1920. Fifty springs.
6. Chalybeate Springs, Meriwether County. Hotel built mid-19th Century. Operated until just after 1900. Baths, stable, dining room, cottages. Hotel known as Grant House burned ca. 1924.
7. Cohutta Springs, Murray County. Hotel built by 1834.
8. Cold Springs, Meriwether County. Two-story Victorian-style hotel built in 1894.
9. Duke Springs, Polk County. Twelve-room hotel, date unknown.
10. Franklin Springs, Franklin County. Two miles from Royston. Small hotel with cottages thought to have been built mid-19th Century.
11. Gordor Springs, Whitfield County. Twelve miles from Dalton. Hotel built by 1850. Burned ca. 1865.
12. Gower Springs, Hall County. Near Gainesville city limits. Hotel, dates unknown.
13. Hillman Springs, Taliaferro County. Seven miles east of Crawfordville. Hotel built 1888 and known as Electric Mound Hotel. Dining room. Had springs as well as "rocks that shock."
14. Hellicon Springs, Clarke County. Four miles from Athens. Hotel built 1834.
15. Indian Springs, Butts County. This is the only known resort that offered more than one hotel. Bath houses were built on the Indian Springs Reserve and were used jointly by the hotels. Following are the most notable hotels there.

Indian Springs Hotel. Built ca. 1823. Operated until 1900. At its peak in the 1850s, it included a two-story hotel, guest annex, ballroom, bar, stable, billiard house, dining room and stage service.

McIntosh House. Built 1846. Burned 1883. Located on south side of the Indian Springs Hotel ballroom. Two-story hotel with dining room, ballroom, bar, stable and stage service.

Elder Hotel. Built 1851. Remodeled 1884. Burned 1897. Second Elder Hotel built 1903 and still in operation. First two structures included two-story hotel, ballroom, dining room, bar, cottages, stable, stage service. Third structure is a three-story building with dining room.

Mountain Spout Retreat. Built 1828. Two-story hotel, stable, garden, blacksmith, store, bar. Located one-half mile south of the spring. Believed to have fallen into disuse after 1831 and eventually destroyed.

Rock Castle. Built ca. 1873. Located on the hill opposite the Indian Springs Hotel. May have been a boarding house or a private home. Still standing but in deteriorated condition.

Calumet Hotel. Built in the early 1890s. Burned 1910. Hotel, dining room, ballroom.

Wigwam Hotel. Built 1890. Burned August 21, 1921. Four-story frame Victorian structure with gas-lighting and baths. Ballroom, casino, dining room, billiards, bowling, bath houses, tennis and pool.

Foy Hotel. Originally called Heard House. Built in the 1880s with 14 rooms. By 1896, known as Foy Hotel. Enlarged ca. 1900. Enlarged again in 1921 to include 55 rooms. Burned May of 1956. Two-story hotel with dining room and ballroom. Located south of the spring and across the road from the Indian Springs Hotel.

Bryans House. Originally built as the private home of the Carter family in 1845. Two-story building. Sold in 1878 to Dr. Bryans and became hotel at that time. Dining room and 18 guest rooms. Also called Invalids Hotel and Sanitorium in the 1880s.

16. Lifsey Springs, Pike County. Six miles southwest of Zebulon near Pine Mountain. Forty-room hotel, two cement bathing pools and cottages. Burned 1908.
17. Lithia Springs, Douglas County. Also known as Salt Springs. Sweet Water Park Hotel built by 1892 and burned ca. 1900. Twenty miles west of Atlanta.
18. Lithia Springs, Haralson County. Near Tallapoosa. 130-room hotel built late-19th Century. Still standing in 1940 and used as a private residence.

19. Madison Springs, Madison County. Seven miles northwest of Danielsville. Hotel built ca. 1825. Two-story hotel with ballroom, dining room and 30 chambers. Cottages, billiards, bowling, ten-pins. Summer school and piano lessons offered. Fell into disrepair after 1865.
20. Mineral Springs Summer Resort, Walker County. Four miles north of Lafayette near Pigeon Mountain. Built 1913. No hotel. Offered club house, open-air sleeping rooms, dining hall, pool room, baths, tennis and bowling. Twenty-one springs.
21. Miona Springs, Macon County. Twelve miles north of Oglethorpe. Twenty-two-room hotel and cottages standing in 1908. Construction date not known.
22. Montpelier Springs, Monroe County. Sixteen miles west of Macon. Built before 1831. Hotel called Montpelier House. Dining room, baths, stables, tent spaces, carriage service to Macon.
23. New Holland Springs, Clarke County. Two miles from Athens. Hotel, dining room, cottages. Operated in the 1880s.
24. Oak Mountain Spring, Talbot County. Two and one-half miles northeast of White Oak. Small hotel and cottages. Date unknown.
25. Oconee Springs, Putnam County. Hotel, dining room and ballroom. Tent spaces. First hotel was log and was standing by 1859. Replaced in 1897 by Oconee House which burned in 1901. Replaced then by a two-story hotel which was torn down in World War II.
26. Oconee White Sulphur Springs, Hall County. Six miles each of Gainesville. Hotel built by 1849. Replaced 1885 with large hotel, dining room, bedrooms with baths, cottages, pavillon, billiards, dancing hall, tennis and bowling.
27. Omaha Springs, Jefferson County. Three-story frame hotel built ca. 1880. Approximately 15 miles northwest of Louisville. Still standing but used as a private residence.
28. Porter Springs, Lumpkin County. Eight miles north of Dahlonega near base of Cedar Mountain. Hotel and cottages built 1876 and still standing in 1940.
29. Rowland Springs, Cass County (now Bartow County). Hotel built ca. 1838 and still operating in 1851. Burned in the 1860s.
30. Roxborough Springs, Atlanta area. Hotel built ca. 1890 with dining room and ballroom.
31. Shamrock Springs, Telfair County. One and one-third miles northeast of McRae. Small hotel with cottages, bath, pool in 1913.
32. Spring Hill, Monroe County. Spring Hill Retreat built ca. 1830. Twenty-two and one-half miles west of Macon on road to Thomaston. Two-story hotel with bar, dining room and cottages.

33. Thundering Springs, Upson County. Hotel and bath houses. Operated from ca. 1830 to ca. 1860.
34. Verner Springs, Gwinnett County. Two miles north of Duluth. Twenty-two-room hotel. Date unknown.
35. Warm Springs, Meriwether County. First hotel built by 1832 and still operating in 1851. Hotel, dining room, ballroom, bath houses, stage service. Burned 1865 and rebuilt ca. 1880. Later replaced by a modern hotel and sanitorium.
36. Watson Springs, Oglethorpe County. Boarding house and cottages standing in 1913.
37. White Sulphur Springs, Meriwether County. Thirty-five miles above Columbus. Hotel, dining room, ballroom, cottages, stables, stage service. Built by 1845. Closed 1865. Replaced by a modern hotel in 1905 with cottages and pavillon which burned in 1947.

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